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CLASS OF 1828

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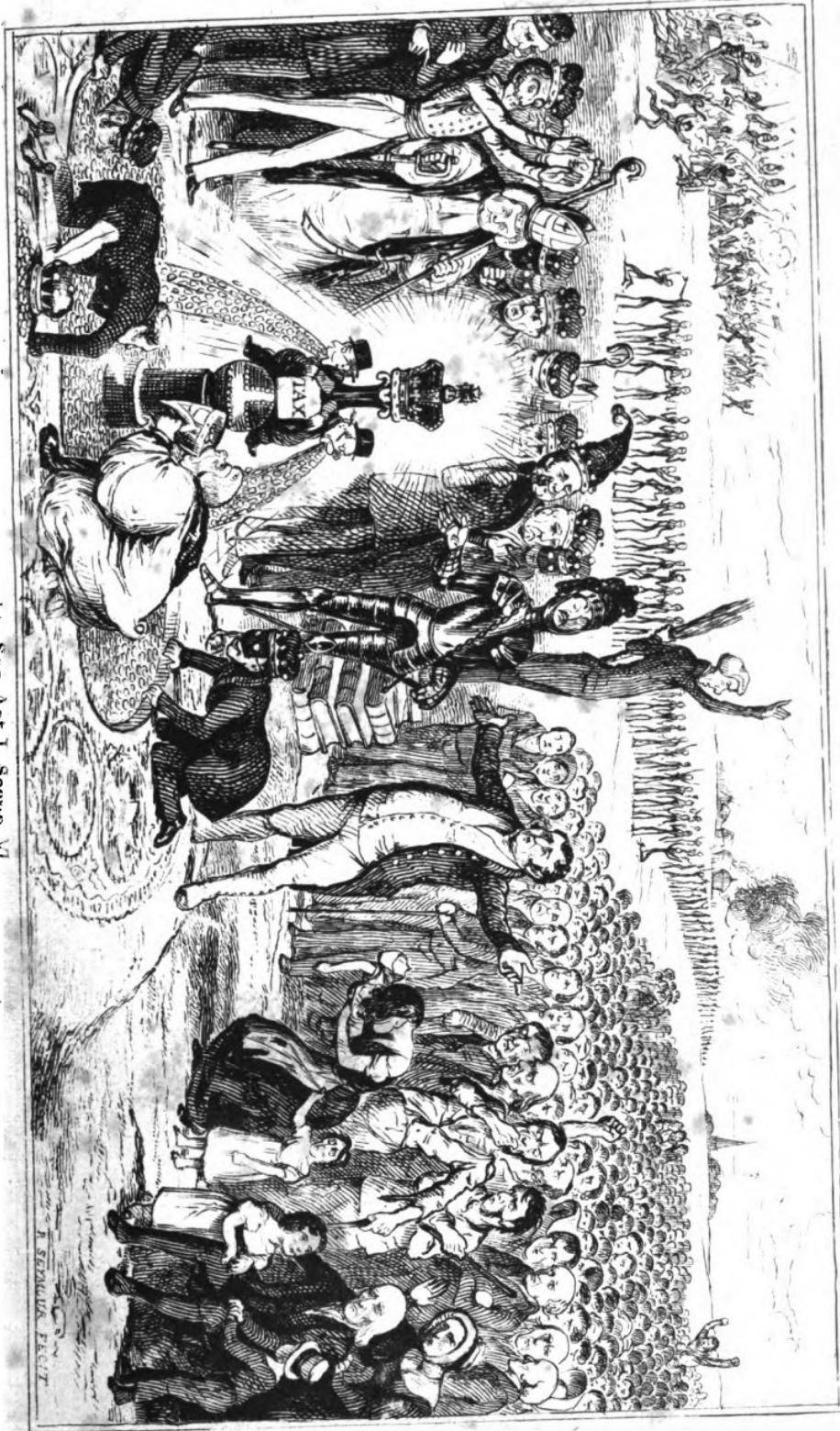
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FROM THE FUND OF
CHARLES MINOT

CLASS OF 1828

SPIRIT
OR
PEERS AND PEOPLE.



See Act I. Scene VI.

①

S P I R I T
OF
PEERS AND PEOPLE.

A National Tragi-Comedy.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"THE EXPOSITION OF THE FALSE MEDIUM," &c.

Richard August Lepsius.

"The violent fit o' the time
Craves it as physic for the whole state."—

CORIOLANUS.

LONDON:
EFFINGHAM WILSON, 88, ROYAL EXCHANGE.

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Wm. J. Ford.

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HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION,

NECESSARY TO BE READ.

IN the reign of King Anchorbroke, a monarch who ruled with arduous *sway* over the once powerful island of Tempestorn, there burst forth, after long smouldering, a most ominous, universal, and inextinguishable convulsion. It originated in a determination on the part of the People not to be oppressed and worked to the bare bones, merely to support the vast and superfluous luxury of the Nobles, nor to be starved in order to afford practical proof—as the last thing they really were able to afford—of the difference between hereditary bondage and hereditary pride. The labourers in the fields thought that the value of their sweating toil from

sunrise to sunset, was hard enough estimated when only commensurate with the price of bread; but when the individual wages of the day's labour of many thousands was much below the price of a quartern loaf, it was not to be endured for ever. The hungry manufacturer shook his withered arm in the air, and demanded to know if there was any tax upon skeletons? The mechanic's wife sent her children out to beg, on the principle that they would either bring home a trifle to enable her to get a little food for them, or else that the 'humane' magistrates would send them to the House of Correction for a fortnight or a month, which she knew would prevent them from being starved, at least for that time. The shopkeeper brushed his threadbare coat, and waited upon a Member of Parliament with a petition as long as a roll of Paddy-cloth, earnestly entreating *equal taxation*, and a memorial, showing that his trade was taken out of his hands by a few large capitalists who set up shops that sold, either with or without licence, the articles of a hundred distinct trades. The Member promised the utmost, but matters

went on just the same. The merchant shrugged his shoulders, and sent for his sons from school to work in his warehouse; partly because education of the best kind was now too expensive for him to incur, and also from a clear conviction that it was of no practical good in these march-of-intellect times, since highly accomplished individuals of all ages could be had as mere shopmen in any department of trade, and for the lowest salaries.

All these things were well known, but the haughty Tempestornian Nobles refused to ameliorate the condition of the people, or prevent their ruin and the consequent starvation of thousands; meantime despising their desperation. The portly priests, with upturned eyes, and visages as long as they could manage their fat to assume for the occasion, exhorted their bleating flocks not to think of things temporal and worldly, but with humble, lowly, penitent and obedient hearts, to build all their hopes upon—hereafter.

The luxurious predecessor of King Anchorbroke, was a personage to whose sensuality and selfishness from youth to age, there had been no bounds.

He had been the most prodigal of kings ; not caring in the least how the money was obtained ; and the most uxorious—not caring whose wives he possessed. As his present majesty once remarked while dropping a tear to his brother's memory ‘ It was all fish that came to net, with Golden Gorgy.’ The courtiers and retainers of the last-named prince, had been most profuse in their expressions of love, homage, and admiration. No sooner was he dead, than he sank down into oblivion edge-ways. Nothing was said about him, after the market of the public press had once been cleared of its merchandise ; and he was forgotten in so brief a space among his courtiers and loudest admirers, that it appeared extraordinary how the ductile nature even of hypocrisy could so easily get rid of the impression of long habit. The very caricatures of him—exquisitely characteristic as many of them were drawn—were out of date, “ flat and unprofitable,” in less than three months !

By the personal extravagances and love of preposterous show and ornament, of this Golden Gorgy ; immediately following the obstinate des-

potism of his slaughter-loving father; by his detested politics, apathy to the condition of his people, patronage of insatiable nobles, and by his countenance of all abuses and oppressions, the country was at last reduced to a state close bordering upon revolution. He died; and was buried with the pomp and ceremony that always attend a King, even when a royal corpse, and he descended into Tartarus—never to rise again. Duke Anchorbroke, his brother, reigned in his stead.

At an auspicious hour for doing good; for changing abuses, the growth of several generations, and emancipating his people from their miserable state of oppression; King Anchorbroke ascended the throne of Tempestorn. He had hitherto been the honorary commander of all their Navy, and as sailors were proverbial in this country for generosity, good feeling and spirit, the highest hopes were entertained of him. The people hailed his ascent with joyful acclamation; the courtiers congratulated him with smiles of prostrate sweetness; a thousand virtues were discovered in him which nobody had even suspected before, and

which we, the humble historians, make bold to say would never have *been* discovered had he not come to the throne. The whole country rang with shouts of bran-new loyalty ; bread and ale were given away by vats and waggon loads, it is said ; illuminations set the flushed streets in a nightly glare, and tall transparencies, bodying forth the person of the King at more than full length, were surrounded with flowers, mottos, and coloured lamps, and underneath was written—changing his name in accordance with his recent ascent to virtue—‘ Long live King Anchorbright ! King of Tempestgone !’

These joyous hopes which, like gallant navies, rode high upon the popular sea with all their freighted dreams of internal peace and happiness, were soon doomed to be wrecked. On his first ascent to the lofty poop of Sovereignty, amidst the splendor and the music, and the banners, and the saluting guns, and the prolonged acclaim of voices ; the novelty of the regal state, with all his fresh and inexperienced sensations of Divine Right, acted so potently upon him that it appeared to his mind as though a King was elevated by the choice of his

people, and that he was moreover bound to consider himself as their protector and father, and exert himself to the utmost in their behalf; their welfare and happiness being, as it then seemed to him, his bounden duty to create and protect as their King. He placed himself in a Neptunian attitude, and waving his trident, swore by the ocean deities, that oppression and penury should no longer be tolerated, and that freedom and justice should supersede unnecessary taxes and abominable abuses: in plain words, he pulled up his trowsers, declared himself a sailor Sovereign—that he was ‘upright and downright—and he’d be d—d if he wouldn’t do away with all humbug, and have a regular-built Reformation throughout the island.’

But goodness of nature, even when inherent in a man, and the ardent wishes to *do* good, even when sincere at heart, and not the consequence of novel excitement, can never be turned to any great and lasting account, without strength and comprehension of mind, decision of character, and fixedness of purpose. The character of King Anchorbroke,

upon whom so many hopes were built, was far more of a negative than a positive nature. He was a cranky hulk, with a touch of the dry **, when the superstructure of the crown and its prerogatives devolved upon him ; and all the fine rigging and gallant show soon fell in smoking ruins. It is true that he seemed, at first, twice as much of a *man* as most of his royal predecessors; and in fact, he was so—not by any inherent manhood, but by being less of a *king*. Heretofore, he had felt himself ‘at home’ in a ship, from habit, and not because he was a good sailor ; he now felt himself not at all so upon a throne ; first, because it is a most troublesome seat in squally weather, to any one who is only easy in fine breezes, and who wants knowledge and decision ; and secondly, because he had no sense of his ‘divine right,’ no regal notions, no ambition, and no wish to *act* the monarch either, by pomp or oppression. In short, he was just the same in mind, character, and expression of face, except the mere wrinkles and bloatage of full-fed time, as when a boy.

A bachelor’s life is said to be sweet; which is

a saying that includes no general truth. A con-nubial life is said to be still sweeter; and this is a general lie. Phrenologists do not give any organ of 'dissatisfaction' in their skull-charts, but as all mortals are dissatisfied by nature, it would appear that this organ should be more commonly of huge development than any other. A bachelor is sick of his independence, not knowing at last what to do with it, and himself: a married man is sick of his hymeneal bondage, and knows not what to do with himself, nor what to do with his tyrannical wife. King Anchorbroke was married.

For a long period previous to ascending the throne of Tempestorn, the worthy Anchorbroke, being past the years of gallantry, and likewise fatigued by the affectionate devotion of one by whom he had been presented with many loving children, fancied himself captivated by the countless charms of the fair Sinister, then princess of Meereshaum Quidcunx. The roseate flame of the torch of Hymen, fresh dipped and reeking with the rich aroma and odours of *branntwein* punch, fell with quickening lambency upon their chaste and

sober hearts, and in an eventful hour the worthy Anchorbroke committed the deed that surrendered up his own liberty, and subsequently the best hopes that his subjects had built upon his generosity and avowed love of justice and freedom.

On first mounting the throne of Tempestorn, in conjunction with her royal spouse, Queen Sinister had assumed a free and liberal air, in accordance with the king's, and thus acquired a speedy popularity. But this being once gained and their seat appearing secure, she soon returned to the splenetic enjoyments of her original nature, and manifested her mean love of * * * * on various minor occasions. Her real feeling and disposition towards her husband's subjects was not long in being fully developed.

The great Egg of Reform had been laid by the Spirit of Tempestorn, in the very centre of the island. Many of the gentry and tradesmen understood its principles, and many did not; consequently some were for its speedy hatching, others against it. Those Nobles who understood it well, were resolved to forward its vitality and assist the

natural activity of its particles : all the rest, who understood it *too* well, were for demolishing it outright, with the rusty spurs of hereditary heels, and with ancient axes. But the great mass of the People were as much in favour of the egg evolving its chick, as they were opposed to the idea of a national famine in the midst of plenty. The manufacturers sent bales of cotton and blankets to form its nest and wrappers, the mechanics contrived machines with steam-pipes to run all round it in a huge net-work of boa-constrictor fashion, to forward the process of incubation. A proper quantity of concentrated steam would have quickly effected the purpose without any other aids, but fears were entertained that too summary and forcing a process would change the chick into an incubus ; and besides this consideration, everybody liked to have some small share in the undertaking. A number of starving workmen laid their heads together, and in defiance of the above rational reflection, determined upon *reflections* coincident with their situation. They fixed burning-glasses in various directions, and such was their desperation in the

application of fire; that had not their intentions been stopped, their glasses destroyed, and themselves sent to prison, instead of the Reform chick, it is fully believed by all scientific men, that they would have hatched the devil. But as a proper covering, admitting light, was requisite to preserve it from the weather and other accidents and offences, a large dome was erected overhead of glass of all colours and compounds, the reflection of which made the egg a most beautiful treat in optics.

The members of the lower house, or Political Main-deck, as it was called ; in opposition to the house of peerless peers, or Tempestornian Quarter-deck ; displayed astounding strength in their measures and presents. They sent piping-hot facts, with steaming theories and comprehensive oaths and pledges, to support the egg—the whole egg—and nothing but the egg. Those peers of the Quarter-deck who advocated Reform, were not far behind the former in energetic breath, and some of them occasionally blew loud blasts of patriotism through brazen trumpets as long and wry-necked as those in common use with the effigies of archangels in

the old psalm-of-David wood-cuts ; while others drew bows of miraculous length, in order to scare away the huge black carrion birds that hovered about ready to pounce with beak and claw upon the egg of promise. Finally, a great national bellows was constructed, through which the hot breath of all the people was propelled, and sent in a circumfluous vapour over the egg, constituting an entire atmosphere for it, of many square miles ; and the King went in person and sat upon it.

Now the Duke of Bagnetlodge about this time was at his zenith. He had been a most fortunate and prodigally applauded captain, and had since been most prodigally rewarded. It was a favourite and immemorial custom with the Tempestornians, to heap munificent gifts upon those whose names would never go down to posterity as a compensation for the want of discernment in the donors. They boasted of the greatest philosophers and poets in the world, but there was no one instance of *their* descendants having any titles wealth or honours conferred upon them. The only individuals so rewarded, were the descendants of those

who supported the extortions of the crown, the church, and the nobility, from the people ; and to this wise arrangement the people, like staring puppets, nodded a mechanical assent. The title of Duke Bagnetlodge was supposed by some to be derived from *bag-net* and *lodge*, some Vandal ancestor having been an angler who dwelt in a hut on the crown lands ; others, less erudite in genealogies, thought it applicable by a far more modern and palpable deduction, and affirmed it to be a corruption from *bagnio* and *to lodge*. We are not disposed, however, to avail ourselves of this scurilous possibility, so opposed to the hero's "great moral lesson," and consider it a mere vulgar version of the stern words, *bayonet* and *logic*.

Upon this arch-duke, so called in compliment to his high and handsome nose, Queen Sinister often looked askaunce. The duke was frequently caught by her in a similar act ; and whether he was thinking of her personal charms, which as we have previously stated, were countless, or the charms of a crown, we know not ; suffice it to say, they soon came to a very amicable understanding, and it was

determined that the king should no longer sit upon the Egg of Reform.

Accordingly the queen, at an unfair moment, when in connubial confidence, at dead of night, the worthy Anchorbroke sleeping in “unadorned majesty,” his hand relaxed from his jewelled sceptre, his royal head half buried in Morphean down, and his ample person favourably disposed—she, wicked princess, poured over him with stealthy gentleness, a two-ounce phial of vitriolic mixture, distilled and compounded by her own hand from a family recipe.

The next morning King Anchorbroke declared himself unable to take his seat. The day ensuing, he affirmed with tears in his eyes, that he found it impossible to sit again upon the egg, as he felt a gathering soreness, which rendered his life a misery to him. A large deputation was quickly made by the tanners, curriers, and other companies, offering to supply him with leather to any extent; but the worthy Anchorbroke reiterated that he felt himself so depressed and perplexed in spirit, by the quantity he had lost, and by the bad condition and ugly aspect of the national affairs, and withal so

thoroughly incompetent to sit, that he could not attempt any thing of the kind again. If they would accept a few more tears, there they were, at his people's service.

Meantime, Queen Sinister, attended by Baroness Bacco, Duke Bagnetlodge, her royal spouse's brother the Duke of Bloodmansdorf, the Earl of Oldenvice, (with a long-handled shovel and turbot shield,) the Earl of Trampleneck, and the Bishop of Babylon, made incessant attacks upon the egg, with strenuous intent to demolish it for ever. But they always found Earl Lovekin at his post, he having taken the king's seat thereupon, being vigilantly guarded by Lord Bushy armed with a tremendous birch. By day or by night, they never deserted it, relieving each other at favourable opportunities, and having their victuals brought to them continually, by Lord Bustle, &c., deputed by the people at large.

Matters thus continued till the period arrived when the egg of promise was to put forth its regenerative chick, and then it was discovered that the king must absolutely give it the finishing glow by

the application of his royal beneficence. The queen seized him by his majestic skirt and swore he should not go. Duke Bagnetlodge posted himself in front in a threatening attitude. Earl Lovekin seized a speaking trumpet and shouted for him to come. Lord Busby flung a chancery net over him, and endeavoured to pull him onwards. The Wigs pulled him one way, the Blocks the other. Finding at last, that all they could effect would be to pull him in two, and as half a king, however copious, would not suffice to cover the egg, the Wigs relaxed their hold, and indignantly wrote for their discharges, merely requesting that their due arrears of wages should be paid up.

The King fled to the sea-side, there to vent his grief. Hither he was quickly followed by his adored consort, who counted on his signing his royal assent to the desired discharge of his ministers. With a deep groan the worthy Anchorbroke took a marlin-spike in his hand, and wrote the order for their discharge upon the sand.

During a whole week Tempestorn was without *any* government; and some of the people aptly

remarked, ‘that as all sorts of government had been tried with no permanently good effect, it would not be amiss to try how things would go on without one, (as far as the *great* authorities were concerned,) since no disasters had occurred during, or in consequence of, the said week’s hiatus?’ Meantime, however, the active Queen led forward the Duke of Bagnetlodge, who had remained concealed behind her flowing train. The gallant arch-nasal veteran advanced with a stiff neck, and bowed from his centre till his figure formed the *gibbetical* angle of 90 deg., *West ion.*, and offered himself as anti-ovum head cook. With a perplexed visage and colourless cheek, the sore-seated Anchor-broke gave an equivocal nod of assent, and loosing a large cambric handkerchief as a fore top-sail, was about to sheer off, when a loud and prolonged groan from the ocean arrested his progress!

He turned!—terror and despair forced expression into his face!—he saw the ocean alive with Tempestornian heads!—in every eye a flame, in every mouth an oath, till gradually their voices swelled to a general roar!—the waves shot up in speary spires

and out-flaring banners—breakers like broken edifices, were tumbling on all sides, and rushing up the strand, the order he had written was quickly erased, and all the party were afloat in the advancing deluge.

In this direful emergency, the King had just enough breath and presence of danger, to call out,

“Lovekin come back!—return unto our arms,
With Buz—Buz—Buzby!—Bagnetlodge avaunt!”

In an instant the ferocious waves retreated—the whole ocean subsided in calm—and they found themselves seated well-soaked and dosed upon the sand, looking grave with incredulous wisdom!

Then the King arose; and he went and dried himself before a large fire, and prepared to fulfil his destiny. And he oiled himself with oil, till his antediluvian soreness had greatly passed away; and he took a glass of grog and went and sat upon the egg; and he hatched it in a short time, and the Reform chick strutted forth, and crew!

But the people could not forget, that, although King Anchorbroke had jerked up his trowsers and

bullied himself onward with the notion of his seamanship through eleven hours, his heart had nevertheless failed him at the twelfth. He lost their confidence, which is the rudder of popular opinion, according to its feelings and comprehension, and as to Queen Sinister, she was seen flying down the foul wind like a harpy. The people even had the disloyalty to rip up a foolish log-book, which was an epitome of the king's whole life, and displaying its principal event, declared their extreme regret that he had not placed the devoted mother of his children upon the throne, instead of the shrew Sinister, of Mere-sham Quidcunx ; so utterly were they lost to all sense of reverence for legitimacy. It was whispered however, that the major part of the king's nearest relatives were very much of the same opinion, considering themselves justified on the principle of self-love.

And now a panic of apprehension began to diffuse itself among all the working classes of the Island, and among all those who advocated and hoped to see the adjustment of the outrageous laws, the reform of all abuses, and the amelioration of the people. It

was discovered that means had been taken to stunt the chick in its growth ; that its wings had been clipped to the bone ; its budding spurs seared with a hot iron, and its general spirit entirely subdued and gone. There were many who went so far as to say that the game chick had been changed for a dunghill. They were not at all deceived by the increase of its ruby-coloured comb and gills, and its great improvement in the art of crowing.

Thus after prodigious and unexampled efforts on the part of an innocent King for the liberty and happiness of his people ; aided, backed, shored-up, and in fact thrust onwards in the cause, by Earl Lovekin, the great Busby, and others ; desperately advocated by three successive parties of boarders, fore and aft, through the sanguinary and very slippery Political Main-deck of iron bull-dogs and brazen-nosed *swivels* ; battled for by day and by night—till the fighting-lanthorns were nearly all hacked to pieces—on the lofty despotic, and uncompromising Quarter-deck of peerless peers ; the Tempestornians found themselves in a foul way of being diddled out of their chick-a-doodle, by the

remorseless machinations of Dukes Bagnetlodge and Bloodmansdorf, high-treasonously associated with * * * * *, ex-princess of Meershaum Quidcunx.

It now became evident that the people had been cheated. "That poor mutilated, inefficient object" said they, pointing to the strutting phantom, "is not the Chick of promise! Look at its circumscribed body; its miserable close-cut wings, tail and plumage! We naturally expected a bird of such general capaciousness and spirit, that every one of us who contributed to its food and roost, should be entitled to a feather at its season of moulting. But we now find that we are scarcely to be allowed a vote or opinion about the shadow of a feather belonging to it! We consider ourselves insulted by a feather-nesting hoax, and we are fully convinced that some infernal witchcraft has been employed, whereby the chick was either changed in substance or spirit before it broke through its shell, and first peered up quaintly to take 'a lunar observation' of the warm beneficence of king Anchorbroke's broad shining face!"

The first summer of Reforming Chickweeds, as the Wigs were sarcastically termed by the Blocks, and by a vast number of all classes, came and passed, and the dolorous apprehensions of the people were fully realised. Human hearts, as usual, were trodden down and ground to dust, and used as coin of the realm; and the chick of promise, while it rendered no good return for all the care and labour that had been expended upon its hatching, seemed disposed to make the Tempestornians pay cruelly dear for enjoying the satisfaction of its name. For instance, Queen Sinister was voted one hundred thousand bags of heart-dust *per an.* if she survived her royal spouse; and twenty millions of the same dust were given for the emancipation of black slaves, while the native white helots in the factories could scarcely obtain any favourable consideration. A million of this human kitchen-stuff was also voted to the Protestant priesthood of the sister isle of Emerald; while the Catholic-protestants, who composed the great religious sect of that country, *protested* in vain against their tyrannical treatment. Other wholesale sums were squandered

in the same headstrong manner; but the People were just as oppressed and miserable, and starving as ever. Certain anxious members of both Houses endeavoured to justify themselves, by declaring, ‘that they had strictly kept their words: they had pledged themselves to support the egg—the whole egg—and nothing *but* the egg. Now the egg was no longer whole, but broken:—in fact, it was no egg at all—it was a Chick; and they could not roast it for the benefit of the people, nor would they themselves be roasted instead!'

This admirable explanation, however, only made matters worse. Events seemed silently approaching towards a convulsion with the beginning of the next chick-weed season, which fell in the winter. This convulsion and its consequences will be shown in a forth-coming Part II. of the present National Drama.

We must not conclude this Historical Introduction without giving a brief preliminary account of a large and long-suffering personage of great consequence, whose once portly and rotund, though since grievously-reduced, figure, will frequently be trundled through the ensuing pages.

Fat Jaques was the most respectable-wealthy person in the island, and the father of the largest family. He had seen many strange vicissitudes, under which, though he had continually changed his name, he never was found to flinch from his duty, in the situation he had always been honoured with by the King and the Nobles—that of Paymaster-General of Tempestorn. This office, it must be understood, was one of high and *peculiar* honour, differing essentially from that of ordinary paymasters who only deal out the monies they receive for that purpose; for it was the duty, and moreover the glory of Fat Jaques, to find all the money himself. To the demand of the king and his nobles, there had hitherto been no bounds, neither had there been any bounds to Fat Jaques's acquiescence. Times were now beginning to alter strangely. Not that the king and nobles, be it rightly understood, became more moderate in their demands, but that Fat Jaques began to find his mine nearly exhausted, and himself losing flesh every day. His spirits also became much affected; his *bonhommie* was

at an end ; his heart thoroughly depressed, and almost hopeless.

The gradations of his fall may be traced in those of the nicknames by which his ungrateful devourers progressively designated him. Once on a time, when the island of Tempestorn was in its glory ; when Fat Jaques was exceeding rich and happy ; when he owned foreign lands and seas, and had jolly tars to protect them, and bring him home the produce and “the needful”—then he was called the Prize Bull. A rare prize he was ; and the king and his nobles hung garlands upon his horns, and combed his hide, and smoothed his tail, and killed the flies that insulted him by perching on his nose, and complimented him, and cut steaks from him in the Abyssinian fashion. After this, by grievous, though slow degrees, these same ungrateful potentates (for the legitimate nobles of almost all countries constitute the legitimate king’s master) called him the “ baited Bull,” and in fact he *was so*, nor were there wanting a number of wags who wrote in large letters upon the walls of the Quar-

ter and Main-deck houses, “Bulls *taken in* here to *bait!*” After this, in consequence of Fat Jaques kicking and flinging out a little at his shameful usage, they tied his legs, and threw him upon his brawny back, and took a mean advantage of him; and he arose with the unsatisfactory cognomen of Jack Ox. And in this state he virtually, that is, soberly and chastely, continued a long while. In consequence, however, of his pacific behaviour, and that he still had a large quantity of gold and jewels quite at their service, the nobles, first borrowing all his diamonds for orders and stars, conferred upon him the title of Jack Ace; and patting him familiarly upon the shoulder, said ‘he was a good fat unit.’ This same name served him for two gradations. For, as in the first instance it answered to the Ace of Diamonds; so, when he was thoroughly sacked, they forced him out to labour in the fields and dig for more, in his capacity of Ace of Spades.

Poor Jack Ace thus pursued his life of oppression and drudgery, amidst kicks and scoffs, even while the potentates were emptying his pockets; till at

length, by a natural *descent*, like all other great genealogies, he arrived at the zero of abjectness, and was very justly called Jack Ass. As his masters, however, could not maintain themselves without his labour and servitude, which was to them a continual source of food and rank, and the sole *ground-work* upon which they built their houses and their pride, it was agreed that he should be re-instated in the appellation of Jack Ace ; and for brevity sake and to display the complimentary familiarity of a master towards his man, this gradually merged into Jaques.

But Jaques nevertheless groaned and sweated at his oppression. They over-worked him with so little consideration, that he grumbled incessantly, in spite of his patience and good nature. He began to look thin and miserable ; declared himself wronged to the utmost ; and took to drinking gin. Whereupon his masters, as a final attempt to pacify him, reinstated him in his original title of Fat, as derived from Prize ; not, as we have declared, that he was at all substantial now, but the mere fact of his being of lean and hollow cor-

pulence, had nothing to do with the matter, this being considered an *hereditary* title. But this did not satisfy him: he was no longer to be cajoled: their conduct smoked. He had long been stinted very much in his meals; but now he was considered as trained by his Potentates, Pastors, and Political economists, to the exquisite pitch of vassalage, *viz.* that of being able to do his work without food. His remonstrances and petitions, and humble memorials and prayers, were all of no avail. His masters, however, finding it impossible to evade his importunities, *admitted the theory of their conduct* towards him; ‘work for them he should to the utmost of his power, and without receiving even the crumbs that fell from their tables!’ So Fat Jaques at length shook off his beast-of-burden lethargy, opened his eyes, seized a great oaken club, and went through the island stirring up the people to a revolution.

The rest of the *Dramatis Personæ* are left to be developed in the progress of the forthcoming National Tragi-Comedy; the which, some folks

will consider as sheer fiction and nonsense ; others, as containing some touches of character, and a few of prophecy ; and the average, as a mixture of all four, the truth of character predominating. It is written for the most part, however, on an opposite principle to that which renders a drama suitable for stage action ; the primal excitements being here chiefly drawn from practical reason and actual suffering, instead of reason being only induced as the occasional consequence of sympathetic excitement from imaginary suffering. In short, (to ease literary grandees from the pangs of metaphysics,) it is addressed rather to the understanding than the passions : its unity is in its general principles or spirit, rather than in action. On reaching the end of the Third Act, the Drama will appear inconsequential ; but all the characters and events will be brought to a fair conclusion, as explained at page 24 of the present Introduction. In closing this, however, we should remind our readers of the advice of the sage Puff ; and (in imitation of the people's Representatives) beg them not to forget

that when any passage appears a little obscure or vague, they are bound to fancy it rife with subtle meaning and most beneficial tendency ; in fact, like an excellent Speech from the Throne.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

KING ANCHORBROKE, *King of Tempestorn.*

QUEEN SINISTER, *his Second Wife.*

BARONESS BACCO, *her Confidential Attendant.*

DUKE OF BAGNETLODGE, *Generalissimo of the Forces.*

DUKE OF BLOODMANSDORF, *Prince of the Blood-royal.*

EARL LOVEKIN, *Prime Minister.*

LORD BUSBY, *High Pedagogue and Usher of the Black Rod.*

LORD NORMANRUST,

EARL OLDENVICE, } *Peers of the Realm.*

EARL TRAMPLENECK, }

THE RIGHT SILLY THE DANDY OF DERRYDOWN, *First Fool to the
Blocks.*

BISHOP BABEL, *Grand Bishop of Modern Babylon.*

LORD SLIDER, *Special Commissioner of Tempestorn.*

FAT JAQUES, *the Great Farmer, Tradesman, and Paymaster of the
Island.*

MRS. JAQUES, *his Wife.*

THE MASTERS JAQUES, *his Sons.*

COCKNEY, *his Servant, and First Fool to the People.*

EDWARD CLEARSIGHT,

JOHN EARNEST, } *Reformers.*

ROBERT VISION,

MR. PULLET, M.P.

RUINED GENTLEMAN.

HIS WIFE.

INCENDIARY.

SOFT SMITH,

ONE-EYED JONES, } *Boon Companions.*

JUG JERRY,

Shopkeepers, Manufacturers, Mechanics, Sons and Relatives of Fat Jaques, Beggars, Policemen, Lawyers, Footmen, Dustmen, Costermongers, Street-preachers, Crowds of starving Labourers, &c. &c.

The scene is laid in Modern Babylon, Capital of the Island of Tempestorn.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

A STREET IN MODERN BABYLON.

Enter three hungry Mechanics, pursuing a lean dog with a beef bone.

1ST. MEC. I have him ! I have him !

2ND. MEC. Yes, but have you got the bone ?

3RD. MEC. Aye—the bone.

1ST. MEC. Yes, to be sure; leave me alone for that.

2ND. MEC. Troth, and I've no objection to leave you alone with it, for there is no meat upon it.

3RD. MEC. (*taking it in his hand*). This bone is the emblem of our hopes. We envied, and pursued, and panted after the poor possessor, eager to seize—imagining a meal—and here ends the chase. We hunted what we thought a prize—and it was one, while we fancied it ; but no sooner have

we seized upon it, than the fat game of hope changes to disappointment ; which is hope's reality all the world over.

2ND. MEC. O, you've been hearing Robert Vision speak ?

3RD. MEC. Yes, he makes one *think*.

2ND. MEC. Could'n't you have cut the matter shorter, by saying the beef bone was an emblem—the only one remaining—of the roast beef of old Tempestorn ?

1ST. MEC. Hark ye, old chap, if Robert Vision makes you think, s'pose you tell us what you think of *him* ?

3RD. MEC. (*scratching his head.*) Why, I think he often does much the same that we are apt to do at the public-house ; reckons without his host.

Enter a BRICKLAYER and a MASON.

1ST. MEC. (*to the BRICKLAYER*). You are a Visionite, too ; what do *you* think of Robert ?

BRICK. Why, I think his buildings would be the finest things in nature, only he uses no mortar.

3RD. MEC. Then the first strong wind that comes floors it, of course.

MASON. I've heard him speak, and like him much ; his promises, and his purposes too, are the right sort of things for all men. But when I've gone away and considered his plans over to myself, it always seemed to me that he placed the first stone well enough, as a small beginning, and then left it and went to place another a mile off, and so on in that way. Now, if he would only place the second stone upon the first, and not the third until those two were fixed, and made inseparable, there would be some chance for the working classes.

1ST. MEC. Ah ! I see if we don't help ourselves, nobody else can ; that's the long and the short of it.

Enter FAT JAQUES, followed by a crowd of ragged Manufacturers and other Relatives.

FAT JAQ. I can't get any employment myself, except I work without being paid for it ; a very general complaint now-a-days. I find it difficult to get cotton or wool, and difficult to get a market for it ; whether in the shape of an old woman's shawl, a Bishop's breeches, or a coverlid for the horses of a

nobleman's carriage; I find it difficult to get the raw material; difficult to work it up, and get any folks to buy it; and impossible to get my money if they do. I've a great mind to hang myself—and I would too, only I'm so hungry.

2ND. MEC. O, for the matter of that, as you're never likely to be better off, you needn't wait. But you're *always* hungry. I never knew you otherwise.

MASON. Well, and why shouldn't he have enough food? (*to Fat Jaques*). You work hard for it, why shouldn't you have it?

FAT JAQ. Now that's just what I say; why shouldn't I? And I've said this for many years. All these manufacturers say the same. I've just paid them twopence a head all round, for their day's labour, working as hard myself as any of them. They say it isn't anything *like* enough to keep body and soul together, wives and children included. There's no doubt of this; no need for the women to ding it in my ears so incessantly. Hunger makes our women turn politicians; that alone shows the state of the country. But what

can I do? I pay the utmost I can on all possible occasions?

MANUFACTURERS, &c. So you do—so you do—you are an old fool for it, daddy.

1ST. MEC. You squander your money on all sorts of humbugs.

2ND. MEC. You let any hoax in the shape of a cocked-hat or a roll of parchment with the arms upon it, tap you to the last drop.

MANUFAC. You do—you do—you are an unfair tapster yourself; you give us the iron hoops off the butts, and our oppressors the beer.

FAT JAQ. Come, I say.

2ND. MEC. Your size is still like a butt, and it would take the largest hoops to compass you; yet they only surround emptiness, and your spirit is like the rust upon them.

FAT JAQ. But I say, though!—

3RD. MEC. Friend, you are neither a reasonable, nor a brave man.

FAT JAQ. I'll soon show you—I *do* say—

MASON. You are extravagant, but not just; you are without discrimination or spirit.

BRICK. You ought to have sense beat into your head with a brick-bat.

MANUFAC. So he ought ; let's beat some in ; there's no other way, to a certainty.

FAT JAQ. (*bawling and thrusting them off*). I won't have any *more* of it ; I've been worked, and baited, and beat and badgered enough, these many years, and I'll bear it no longer. D—, and dumb-founder, and be hanged to all the lords and ladies, and crowned kickshaws, and jews, and pharisees, and vandals of the island ! aye, and of the earth too ! I *won't* put up with it any longer !

Omnes. Ha ! ha ! ha ! Bravo, Jaques ! bravo !

3RD. MEC. My good man, you've said that a great many times before.

Omnes. He has—to be sure he has !

2ND. MEC. O, you're a *natural* beast of burden.

FAT JAQ. It a'nt my nature to be told so ! (*knocks him down*).

BRICK. It's quite true, though.

FAT JAQ. It's a lie ! (*knocks him down*).

MANUFAC. You know it's true.

FAT JAQ. You are a swinish multitude! (*they knock Fat Jaques down—a scuffle ensues*).

(*Loud cries outside*).—The Lord Mayor's coach is coming! the Lord Mayor's coach!

Enter COCKNEY (servant to Jaques), running breathless.

COCKNEY. Oh! Mr. Fat Jaques—here, sir, please, sir—here's the cockt-hat show!

FAT JAQ. (*jumping up*). Where! where! which way?

Omnes. There it is! there it is!

[*Exeunt omnes, running one over another.*

S C E N E II.

PAUL'S CHURCH YARD.

Enter Lord Mayor's Coach, with Procession, &c, followed by motley groups. Music.

CONSTABLE. Stand aside, you young dog, you!

YOUNG DOG. I sha'n't. Vot d'ye think o' that now?

*Enter FAT JAQUES and COCKNEY running at the head
of a crowd.*

FAT JAQ. Where is it? oh! here's the coach!

A MEC. Get off my toes, will you?

A COUNTRYMAN. I can't, master; there's no room to set a foot elsewhere.

COCKNEY. My eye! what a beauty! it's all fresh gilded! I say, sir, isn't it a beauty?

FAT JAQ. I never saw it look so well before.

APPRENTICE. How *werry 'ansome*!

A LAWYER'S CLERK. I wish I could get near enough to lay my hand on it.

A YOUNG THIEF. So does I, too.

A VOICE. Is that the Lord Mayor? Which is the Lord Mayor? Is that chain round his neck all real gold?

FAT JAQ. To be sure it is—of course.

A SHOP-KEEPER. How I like to see 'em go along so. I never saw a finer sight.

2ND. SHOP. Capital well that fellow plays the trumpet, to be sure!

COCKNEY. (*bawling*). Vell done, old double drum!

Omnès. Bravo ! hurra ! hurra !

A MEC. I say, Jaques, how much did that
ere coach cost ?

FAT JAQ. I'm sure I can't say.

MEC. Why, you ought to know—you paid
for it.

FAT JAQ. So I did ; that's a very just observa-
tion of yours.. Look at those red flags ! see how
they're all laughing in the coaches ! What a dinner
we shall have ! I'm always invited.

MEC. They're laughing at *you*.

FAT JAQ. At me ! what for ?

COCKNEY. Ah ! vot for—tell us that, mister,
since you're so werry vise ?

MEC. Because they're riding, and old Jaques
is a-foot.

FAT JAQ. That's very true, too ; and what's
more, it ought not to be. I'll kick up a row, and
next Lord Mayor's-day I'll have a coach all to
myself, among them. They don't behave either
honestly or respectfully to me—almost as bad as
the government. Hillo ! there's a hand in my
pocket ! my handkerchief's gone !

COCKNEY. This is the man wot prigged it !

OLD THIEF. (*calmly*). No sich thing.

FAT JAQ. (*seizing him*.) You did ; it must have been you. (*searching him*). You've passed it away among your pals ; but I know you stole it !

OLD THIEF. Prove your words, mister ?

FAT JAQ. Why, I had a fine handsome hand-kerchief in my left-hand coat pocket, and now it's gone. I had it a minute ago, and you've been standing close behind me longer than that !

OLD THIEF. (*calmly*). Ah ! you're superficial.

VOICES. Ha ! ha ! ha ! a regular old prig's evasion ; an hereditary answer.

A CONSTABLE. Make way, fellows, make way.

A DUSTMAN. Who do you call fellows ?

2ND. DUSTM. Does you mean to say we're fellows ?

COCKNEY. Knock off his gallus cocked-hat !

(*they knock it off*).

A POLICEMAN. Come, stand back here, stand back !

[*They fall back. Exit procession. Crowd follow in a stream. Two Mechanics remain.*

1ST. MEC. Well, so much for that ; and what's the good of it ?

2ND. MEC. Ah, but where's the harm of it ?
The Lord Peter's a good man.

1ST. MEC. No doubt of it ; but I'm tired of shows.

Enter a DUSTMAN.

DUST. The devil take the foremost, I say ;
aye, and for the matter o' that, all that follow.

2ND. MEC. Don't you say a word agin the Lord Mayor.

DUST. Who's a-speaking agin him ? Lawnic's the best one we've had this many a year ; only I hates all this here expense and swanderation ; not that I grudges him being Lord Mayor, (*shaking the ashes out of his pipe, and folding his arms,*) I don't, so help me—grudge it him a bit, though I'm as good as he ; but I hates this here expense, when such a lot of us are out o' work, and hungry. That's all I've got to say.

1ST. MEC. Fat Jaques had much better spend his money in helping twenty thousand mechanics

and other producers to a day's meal, than in over-gorging a few hundred aldermen, and placemen, and fat knaves of all sorts.

2ND. MEC. See there!—there go a lot of 'em to dinner, with their stomach-pumps under their arms!

Enter FAT JAQUES, stamping with rage.

FAT JAQ. O, monstrous and unparalleled injustice! O, shame of my years and grey hairs!

2ND. MEC. What's the matter, Jaques?

FAT JAQ. Here's a pretty infamous pass things are come to! (*walks up and down rapidly.*)

1ST. MEC. What fresh calamity has happened?

FAT JAQ. The last and worst! oh, shameful act!

DUST. Out with it—let's have it.

FAT JAQ. I'm not invited to the dinner!!

2ND. MEC. Not invited! well, never mind.

FAT JAQ. Oh, I won't be pacified; don't attempt to pacify me.

2ND. MEC. It's too bad, though.

1st. MEC. And you have paid for so many dinners !

DUSTMAN. Ha ! ha ! ha ! sarve you right, old boy.

FAT JAQ. And this is not the worst of it either. I'll set fire to the city !

1st. MEC. No, don't.

FAT JAQ. I will—I'll fire the city, and roast every alderman in it—and then who's for crackling ?

DUST. And pray vot *is* the vurst of it ? Did the Lord Mayor meet you in person at the hall door, and spit in your eye ?

FAT JAQ. Oh no, not he, bless his heart ! but there was a regular sealed official order sent down from the Quarter-deck house of nobles to say, that I was not to be admitted to the City dinner ; no, nor on board any one of the barges ; because they said I'd been obstropperous of late, and they feared I should make radical speeches over the bottle.

Omnés. Shame ! shame !

FAT JAQ. But I won't put up with it ; in fact I can't bear it any longer.

DUST. Here's a pretty kettle o' fish !

FAT JAQ. Where?—Oh, you're mocking me! Bear it I will not; I've said the word, and I'll keep it.

DUST. Suppose you make a speech here?

FAT JAQ. Well, so I will.

Enter COCKNEY, with a crowd of Mechanics, Manufacturers, poor Shop-keepers and others.

DUST. (*ringing his bell*). Silence, gentlemen, silence! Mr. Jaques—called Fat, and looking so; but still werry empty—is going to make us a speech.

Omnes. Hurra! let's hear! silence!

[**FAT JAQUES** gets upon the highest step of a door.

FAT JAQ. Gentlemen, I wish to know if a man who works hard from sun-rise to sun-set, and has done this all his life, is not to be considered a valuable member of any community of mankind, and as such to be respected?

Omnes. Hear! hear! to be sure!

DUST. Silence!

FAT JAQ. I wish to know if such a man con-

sents to give the earnings of his labour towards the support of superior ranks in society, whether he ought not, in common generosity, to be allowed to retain enough for his own necessities, and even his comforts ?

Omnes. Of course ; hear ! hear !

DUST. Silence, I say !

COCKNEY. Silence !

DUST. Hold your tongue, you young varmint !

COCKNEY. Vy, a'nt I as much right to speak as you ?

DUST. If you doesn't hold your d—d sarcy tongue, I'll beat you into the vurst of cat's-meat with this here bell !

Omnes. Silence !

FAT JAQ. Not to mention generosity, whether he ought not to be allowed that portion for which he stipulates,—in common justice, in common decency ; nay more, in common honesty ?

Omnes. Bravo ! bravo ! hear ! hear !

DUST. Silence, the lower orders !

FAT JAQ. This small portion for our necessities and comforts, our lords and masters, and

spiritual pastors' do *not* allow us: therefore, they have no common generosity; no justice; no decency; and not common * * * !

COCKNEY. (*in a shrill voice*). Bra-voo !

Omnes. (*vociferating*). Bravo ! bravo ! huzza ! bravo !

FAT JAQ. Finally; if they persist in not allowing us to keep that small portion which is our right, then we will peaceably take what we consider to be our share; and in future work only for ourselves.

Omnes. (*vociferating*). Huzza ! bravo ! down with all hereditary rogues ! bravo !

Enter a posse of Police Soldiers.

Omnes. Here's the police ! look out ! here they come !

INSPECTOR. Charge the rioters.

[*Police rush upon the crowd, who all run away.*
FAT JAQUES is seized.

(*Loud cries outside*). Rescue ! rescue !

[*FAT JAQUES is taken to the Station-house without opposition.*

SCENE III.

A PRIVATE ORATORY IN THE PALACE OF THE RIGHT REV.
FATHER IN GOD, BABEL, BY DIVINE RIGHT, BISHOP OF
BABYLON.

Enter BISHOP BABEL and EARL TRAMPLENECK.

BAB. Not so, my friend ; thy generous ardour
sweeps,

Like to a fiery javelin o'er the targe,
Gaining applause by singeing distant fields,
But errant of the aim. The best of zeal
Is dangerous if to itself resigned.

Be zealous, yet with policy ; be firm
And bold of passion, but thy balance keep.
Be subtle as the lynx, and use its eyes ;
But let the movements of the fermenting soul
Be not o'er charged or hasty, lest the cause
Crack and dismember, and the million seize,
And scatter to the winds, if once disjointed,

What else had stood a rock for coming ages,
As it *hath* stood in ages past.

TRAMP.

No more!

Right Reverend Father, subtle art thou of speech,
And in the workings of thy countenance,
A meaning is imprinted of thy thoughts
And secret sensations, that conveys
More than all words. I would assume
Thy downy presence and demean so meek,
Thine equanimity of balanced power,
But that the labouring torrents of my soul
Struggle too hard for vent : can Reason's hand
Ape the sea deities, and bind them in ?
Can it put down a subterranean fire,
As with a rod miraculous?—No, father :
And mark thou this—as well may vassal men
Strive to oppose, or with recoil fling back,
Up to the summit of the thundering rock,
The cataract—as my descending course.

BAB. Beware that thou descend not to the grave !
The Tempestornians are mere slaves, 'tis true ;
But 'tis their ignorance—their prejudices,
Their blindness, and our cunning, keep them so ;

Else were they giants, whom we could not curb ;
Their thraldrom is their folly—they're not weak.

TRAMP. The better that—I love to cope with
strength.

Give me the forest lion in his youth,
To grapple with ; the uplifted elements,
Smiting the earth and sea ; these are fit peers
For contest, where defeat brings no disgrace ;
But when the vassal dares to beard his lord,
E'en victory soils the foot that treads him down.

BAB. Be calm, fierce soul,—intemperate truth
thou speak'st :
Reserve thine energies for the *fit* hour,
And then thrust home !

TRAMP. Doubt not but I will do so.
Yet, were it well their rude attack to wait,
Rather than crush rebellion's cradled form ?
For, sooner or later, come rebellion must.

BAB. True, it must come ; but let us not appear
The aggressors—so that mother church may bear
No stain apparent, nor good colour want
For direst retribution on their heads.
Touch not the fruit till ripe ; then swallow all !

T R A M P. Well hast thou said ; and I must quell
 my pulse
 With heavy reason, and cold judgment's lore,
 Though 'tis like tomb-stones o'er an earthquake's
 birth.
 Meantime, I will go smoulder midst the walls
 Of my chateau, and strive to lie perdue,
 In best accordance with the counsel sage
 Of one who first grim slaughter's chains shall loose,
 And loud proclaim the red birth of the sword !

[*Exit the EARL OF TRAMPLENECK.*

B A B. Farewell, thou glorious peer of Tempestorn !
 Farewell, bright arm of valour ! (*solus*). Folly go
 with thee
 Yet they're of excellent use—these hot-brained men ;
 For, being managed in their boiling moods
 While wisdom sees the policy of peace,
 And at the fitting season well put in ;
 Like a sheath'd blade that slumbers through dark
 years,
 And at the sudden trumpet's piercing call,
 Flies i' the sun's face ; so to good account

SCENE IV.

A LARGE SQUARE.

Enter two SHOP-KEEPERS.

1ST. SHOP. *What* in the world am I to do? I can't pay these taxes if it were to save my life—I owe two quarters, and haven't anything *like* the money!

2ND. SHOP. You must do as others do—let them seize.

1ST. SHOP. By which I shall lose two hundred per cent. Think of my labour employed, and that of my workmen, in making those cabinets and rose-wood tables,—a pretty thing to put these up to auction for any thing they'll fetch!

2ND. SHOP. Ah! they fall *eventually* into the hands of some lord or bishop, who gets them for a song.

1ST. SHOP. It makes my blood boil.

We turn what else would ruin any cause,
 Startling our ambush'd plots into the light,
 Like a foil'd tiger to be hunted down.

No, no,—we'll manage better. Trampleneck
 Is ours, and that's enough. Lord Normanrust,
 With all his old retainers, the vast wealth
 And sweeping interest of Creamlandshire,
 With other nobles, are our sure allies ;
 Since their own fortunes rise or fall with ours.
 Queen Sinister's a cool, keen-sighted dame ;
 She much affecteth Bagnetlodge—'tis well.
 Their plan is deep-laid, yet Earl Oldenvioe
 Hangs back reluctant,—craving, and fearing all
 things !

We'll do without his aid. Duke Bloodmansdorf,
 Or Bagnetlodge, may to * * * * ascend.
 I'll give my ear to both; but still incline
 In actual purpose to the ——n's approved.
 So shall the Church its tottering fabric rear
 To heaven once more upon its former rock;
 High spiring in its old authority,
 The herd of men shall gild it with their toil,
 And let the stars wink at us as they may.

[Exit.]

2ND. SHOP. And even if a lord gave a fair price for your whole stock,—after long credit, and your not daring to ask for your money,—the sum would not equal that which you pay every year above him in unfair taxation. There's no justice in the * * * * of Tempestorn,—it is all a sheer system of robbing tradesmen and poor people.

Enter FAT JAQUES.

FAT JAQ. O the particular set of brutes, these Babylonish magistrates:—the lowest pit of perdition is too good for them !

2ND. SHOP. Why, they seem to have let you off your recent affair pretty quickly—you've no reason to grumble.

FAT JAQ. Nor any reason to feel for other people—that's what you mean. But I do, and I grumble as much for them as myself.

1ST. SHOP. Why for yourself?

FAT JAQ. First, because I was dragged to the station-house for making a patriotic speech ; secondly, that although I made no resistance to the regular police authority myself, nor did any

one lift a hand for my rescue (loud as they bawled instead), I was nevertheless beaten over the shoulders and crown of my head by their brutal truncheons—see, here's a bump, and I'm all over black and blue and yellow bruises besides, and was half strangled, into the bargain, as we say in trade: thirdly, I was badgered by the inspector at the station-house; my story not fairly heard—the policemen are always believed before any gentleman—and my person contaminated by the vermin that swarmed in the dark room where they locked me up in company with a most depraved drunken crowd of various sexes. What a dreadful scene it would have been for my wife—and me too—had she come there after me! Fourthly, I was kept there all night. Fifthly, I was taken before the magistrates in the morning, and snubbed and bullied by them before I was suffered to say a word in my own defence. Sixthly, the policemen told barefaced lies; contradicted everything I said; then contradicted themselves; then brazened it out, and were complimented by the magistrates for doing their duty.

1ST. SHOP. But how came you to get off so soon?—By bail, to a large amount, perhaps?

FAT JAQ. To be sure, and my own recognizances to five times as much more. They know I shall be getting again into some scrape or other, before long—a dead robbery, you see.

2ND. SHOP. But you said you grumbled as much on account of others as yourself: all this is about yourself only.

FAT JAQ. Ah, Mr. Higgins! what I could tell you about the brutish conduct of the Babylonish magistrates towards poor people, would fill a volume—that ought to fill your eyes with tears, and the whole city with groans, as it does my heart with disgust, hatred, and execration. There, in a big-wigged court of injustice, I saw a poor girl committed to prison for trying to sell some nick-nacks of her own making, in order to support her mother and four children besides herself: there, I saw a destitute woman, the wife of a soldier, to whom she was journeying, committed to prison, with her three hungry children, for being found “huddled together,” as she said, in the cold streets

at night, having no bed to go to, or money to procure food ; there, I saw thieving encouraged by the remorseless persecution of honest poverty ;—there, I saw some hungry-looking boys ordered a sound flogging, partly for the trivial offence of stealing a pen'orth of apples, but chiefly to patronise some Jack in office—at the Old Belly, of course, because the fees for a flogging are treble there to what they are at Clerkman's-knell ;—there I saw palpable nakedness and ghostly famine mocked at, and called mere *cant*, and sent to prison—except the miserable wretch besought the magistrate with agonised earnestness to *be* sent there, to escape starvation, and *then* the object was compelled to depart. No, Mr. Higgins ; you mistake the true Tempestornian character if you think I do not feel these things deeply. The habitual conduct of the Babylonian magistrates towards the destitute, is enough to make the poor tear up the pavements, and dash the * * * * out as they go home to dinner. I wonder some famishing man does not sacrifice his worthless life in making a grill of one of these heartless storks—they're not men !

2ND. SHOP. Why don't you do it yourself?

FAT JAQ. (*pauses*). I've got a shop to look after as well as you.

2ND. SHOP. And there, I fear, begins, centres, and ends, all our patriotism.

FAT JAQ. No, but I've got a great *many* shops.

2ND. SHOP. The same argument holds.

FAT JAQ. Well, but you see, Mr. Higgins, I'm not placed in a similar position, just yet. I've a great many farms and manufactories, and merchandise, and all sorts of things ; and although my affairs are deeply and thoroughly involved, still I can't be said to be in want of a dinner.

2ND. SHOP. Exactly : you wait till that happens, and then it will be too late.

FAT JAQ. No, it won't though.

1ST. SHOP. It would be too late to do any good to the country—that is, the shopkeepers. See what a situation *I'm* in ? I expect my goods to be seized every hour for those cursed assessed taxes. What would you advise me to do, Mr. Jaques ?

2ND. SHOP. Stand still.

1ST. SHOP. I didn't speak to *you*: (*to FAT JAQUES*) would *you* advise me to stand still?

FAT JAQ. What, and let them rob you of your property?—it's hardly in flesh and blood to bear that, whatever else one bears.

2ND. SHOP. Why, *you've* borne it all your life!

FAT JAQ. Yes, but they now do it openly, and without the least ceremony or decorum—they tell us they *will* have the taxes! This makes all the difference.

1ST. SHOP. Not all, for we're not able to pay now.

FAT JAQ. True, I had forgot that. Well then, I think we really can't do better than stand still—that is, as still as we can.

1ST. SHOP. But the people won't suffer it—perhaps the mob will interfere and beat off the officers—we can't help that, you know?

FAT JAQ. No, to be sure not—ha! ha! God forbid we should.

2ND. SHOP. I'm no better situated myself,

than the rest: if my goods are not seized this time, they will next—it's impossible to meet such extortionary demands. Look at all these large houses—these mansions of the great! Unequal taxation enables them to stand, in spite of their gambling, their luxury, and ocean-like extravagance; while honest tradesmen are ruined in spite of their economy and industry early and late. I'm sick of my life, and begin not to care a d—n for anything.

FAT JAQ. I begin to come to my senses.

1ST. SHOP. What is the use of all our honest endeavours? See the pains we take to go to the cheapest market, get the cheapest workmen, tell the most plausible lies to our customers—for apt lies are the essence of a good salesman—and yet we can scarcely live; for just as we have covered our expenses and begin to make profit, come the accursed taxes that sweep away all the produce of our toil. I wish to my soul the mob would do something, for we might almost as well shut up shop as keep it open!

2ND. SHOP. And you would applaud from the house top?

1ST. SHOP. *That* I would—or rather within the house, for we need not show ourselves: our hearts, you know, may be with them just the same.

2ND. SHOP. Provided they do our property no mischief, you mean?

1ST. SHOP. Yes, of course—we suffer enough from government.

FAT JAO. Well, come this way—let's have some bread and cheese, and porter, and hope for better times.

2ND. SHOP. Better times won't come of themselves.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

A DIRTY NARROW STREET.

Enter a BEGGAR in tatters, with a wooden leg.

BEG. (*singing*). *Tol-de-rol de rol day!* Begging's a very different thing now to what it wor seven

years agone. I've serv'd an apprenticeship to it, and by this time I knows my business as well as e'er a beggar on town ; but I can hardly make out a living now. There's no money in the country, that's for sartin. Howsomedever, *tol-de-rol de ri day !*

Enter Two other BEGGARS, with threadbare coats and ragged aprons.

BEG. Oho ! here's opposition in the field ; I'll stump myself off. [going.

2ND. BEG. Stop a bit, old boy ; we shan't ruin you by the Competitive system—there's no one near to try our luck upon.

1ST. BEG. There's windows to the houses, and a copper might fall as from heaven ; though there's more likelihood of wind and rain, and charity slops ; nevertheless, there's some chance of browns, so I'll hop off to another place.

2ND. BEG. Ah, you've plied all up the street, and we've no hope.

1ST. BEG. I b'lieve you're right there ; and

moreover than that, you looks werry like raw recruits.

3RD. BEG. Yes, indeed, we are; we're not used to this sort of business at all.

2ND. BEG. We're mechanics, and very ready to work, but can't get any, so we're driven to this for means of existence.

3RD. BEG. Or for the chance of it, rather. We have not had anything given us all day, and we're almost famished. But you were singing when we turned the corner?

1ST BEG. Vy you see as I sleeps in the street—obleeged to it of late, times are so hard—in course I gets up werry early. I've been at it since five this morning, and only got a single brown; but just now I picked up one out of the gutter, so that finds me a roll and half a pint o' beer. Who's a better cause to sing than the man who in these here flinty times has got a dinner in his belly, or his pocket?

3RD. BEG. Very true, very true; I wish we had a right to sing.

2ND. BEG. How did you lose your leg?

1ST. BEG. Nine years ago I was under-groom to Lord Oldenvice; and once as he was out riding on a horse what was his betters, the horse having 'nation objection to spurs, found his sides werry coolly let blood in profoosion, so he flung my Lord on the road and bolted. His foot stuck in the stirrup, and I was just off my horse in time—for I seed what was going to happen—to seize the reins and save his precious life, ven the horse in rewenge tipt me a hint of his natur, and broke my leg all to splinters.

3RD. BEG. Well, but didn't he give you a pension? I've always heard he was famous at giving pensions to retire?

1ST. BEG. He ordered my discharge as soon as I could go on crutches. He said, what use was a groom with one leg!—and he couldn't afford, in justice to his family, to pay wages for nothing, and keep idlers about his house. Three months after, when I was werry poor and distressed, I sent him in a petition that he would pay the bill for this here wooden pin; but he said as how he knew nothing whatsomever about sich things. So after working

as well as I could, here and there, and trying in vain to get into the verkus, and then sweeping roads and what not, I was obligated to take to begging, and here I is !

Enter a GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT. First BEGGAR hobbles up to him.

1ST. BEG. Lord bless your honour ! I hopes your Lordship will bestow a trifle upon a poor fellow that hasn't had a single bit of bread to eat these three days? So help me, your honour, as true as I stands here, I haven't a single halfpenny in the world, and all the blessed Saints in the cullender know I speaks truth !

COURTIER. Get away with you ! (*going.*)

1ST. BEG. I lost my leg, your honour, at the Battle of Trafalgar ; and I've sailed all the world over with his Majesty Lord Nelson ; and there isn't a battle what you've heard tell on, that I've not been in. I hopes your honour—

2ND. BEG. Pray sir, consider our condition.

COUR. Get out of my way, you scoundrels !

[*Exit.*

3RD. BEG. Pray sir,—

1ST. BEG. What business have you to interfere with my man? He was mine first—you must larn better manners!

Enter a POLICEMAN.

POL. I'll teach you all better manners. Come along with me—if you offer the least resistance, I'll split your skulls with my truncheon, before you can cry Jack Robinson.

1ST. BEG. Now then, mister! Vot harm have we done, I should like to know?

POL. Come along with you all three! Their Worships have come to a determination to punish all destitute vagrants with the utmost rigour; and 'specially all beggars.—I heard you all begging of that ere gentleman.

1ST. BEG. No sich thing, mjster.

POL. I *saw* you all in the act, and that's as good. You will get three months at the tread-mill, every man jack of you,—come along!

1ST. BEG. Oh! that I'd snatched his gold seals

with his ticker at the end of 'em, and made off while
t'others bothered him for browns !

POL. (*collaring him*). Come along with you.

2ND. BEG. Petty larceny is safer than begging
—we shan't forget this lesson when we get out
of prison !

3RD. BEG. My poor hungry wife—my poor
dying children !

POL. Come along, I say, you beggarly rascals.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.

A LARGE SQUARE.

Enter Three NOBLEMEN-FOOTMEN, in rich liveries.

1ST. FOOT. What sayst thou, gallant nabob,
to *that* pun ?

2ND. FOOT. It's well enough, but too *canaille*.

3RD. FOOT. That's true.

Sir Bob forgets himself at times, although
He's of so high a family ;—methinks
This knee-buckle shines well ?

1ST. FOOT.

On such a *calf*,

How should it otherwise?

2ND. FOOT.

Ha ! ha ! ha !

3RD. FOOT. It seems as if you meant that
trash for wit.

1ST. FOOT. I meant it, gentlemen, for what it is.

Were you at the Italian Opera last night?

You were not at the club.

2ND. FOOT. Our people went,
But I was otherwise engaged at home.1ST. FOOT. What a fine singer is that
Malibran !A splendid creature too—I'd marry *her*.2ND. FOOT. Humph ! not so splendid neither :
she's too thin.1ST. FOOT. Ah, but I like her spirit; hang
your fat !—(*sings*) *una voce poco fat*.3RD. FOOT. Pray cease your noise, why do you
play such pranks ?1ST. FOOT. What's that to you, sir knight of
woful phiz ?While the sun shines I'll gambol in his rays ;
Were they not made for jolly boys like us ?

We eat, we drink o'the best the world affords ;
 No care have we for how the gold's obtain'd ;
 And sleep in beds of down. Let fools drudge on,
 Sweating and grinding—groaning at the plough,
 Groping in mines, or starving at the loom ;
 Our dial's hand points but to one bright hour,
 For all its circle brings the self-same joy.

2ND. FOOT. Well done, I swear.

3RD. FOOT. Why yes, *that's* well indeed.
 Think you this aiguillette hangs gracefully ?

1ST. FOOT. There's *such* a turbot at our
 house to-day ;
 And only three o' the family at home !
 P'rhaps you'll drop in ?

3RD. FOOT. What wine d'ye have ?

Enter a poor MECHANIC.

2ND. FOOTMAN. Come, let's be off : what dirty
 fellow's this ?

MEC. You'd look dirty too, sir, if you had
 no soap found you. Those who are wretchedly
 hungry and have no means of getting a meal,
 can't spare time to care or think of how they look.

I hope, sir, you'll see if you can't find me a small trifle?

1st. Foot. I say, my lord, here's "poco fat" again!

3rd. Foot. Get away, fellow,—come, I sha'n't stay here.

2nd. Foot. Let's see, my man? (*feeling in his pocket.*)

Mec. Oh pray do, sir! I'm in real distress, I assure you.

2nd. Foot. What is your trade, my man?

Mec. A journeyman carpenter, sir; but I haven't been able to get a bit o'work these three weeks.

3rd. Foot. That's very strange, there's so many new buildings continnerly being herected!

Mec. And I've a wife, too, just laying-in.

3rd. Foot. Come, what do you stay here for?

2nd. Foot. Ah! well my man, I've got nothing for you.

(*Loud shouts outside.*)

1st. Foot. See, here's a motley group of the populace coming this way!

2ND. FOOT. Quick, or we shall be covered with vermin.

[*Exeunt FOOTMEN hastily.*

Enter some PATLANDERS, BRICKLAYERS, MASONS, and a Crowd of starving PEOPLE, all clamorously following FAT JAQUES.

1ST. BRICK. Be jazes! and we're the boys that will niver lave ye at all, misther Jaques; so we won't.

2ND. BRICK. Not so long as we've a single daacent-covered leg to go upon—nor after!

A MASON. Niver lave you, misther Jaques, till you put us in the way of arning a male now!

FAT JAQ. (*loudly*). I can't do more than is possible!

1ST. BRICK. Och! and my sowl upon you, but you must do more than that, for die in the dirty strates we can't wid any comfort or propriety at all, my ould jewel!

Omnes. (*clamorously*.) Why are we to die in the streets? What is to become of us?

FAT JAQ. What can *I* do,—what would you have me do?

A MASON. Och ! and lave off building huge places for the government, and give us some of the money instead, just by way of raising our past wages, which were only three-pence a day. Och ! heart alive o' me now, what's the good of all these fine buildings to the poor people who build them ! Little's the pay we get to kape enough strength in our bodies to work with ; and when all's compleat and daacent, the noblemen-folk and tun-bellied praists, get fat in them, by raison o' the taxes set on the edifices.

ALL. (*clamorously.*) Yes, the Priests and the Nobles get fat on the Taxes !—*They grind our bones to make them bread.*

FAT JAQ. (*bawling*) You confuse my brain—you turn my head !

MASON. And a good job too, honey; for it's been turned so long that a fresh twist might set it in the right place again. Ought not those who build the big places, I say to you again—ought not the workmen to have a small share of the taxes, instead of those who do nothing for anybody but themselves ? Och ! if the papple were all of my mind, we'd soon

have a traty with France or America, and pawn St. Paul's, and half the lords' palaces, so we would!

FAT JAQ. I wish we could,—I wish we could —I'm very sorry we built them at all; the more we do, the more we may; besides being treated all the worse for what we have done.

ALL. Bravo! bravo! now you speak like a man.

FAT JAQ. Yes, yes, and I mean to act up to it; and so do you all, my fellow-citizens, and countrymen,—Tempestornians, Pat-landers, Plaids-men, and all others whose liberal feelings are matter of fact. Nor is this the first time I have spoke out my mind. I have done so to their faces —upon my soul, 'I have—upon several occasions recently. I was driven to it. Have I not complained and groaned for years?—have I not again and again represented to the haughty Nobles, the dreadful state we were in? Have I not declared to them, that the people were driven half mad by continued oppression, and would not bear the injustice any longer? But to what purpose? Though I have exhorted these pampered Lords in coronets and mitres, with thousands of starving People in

my train, echoing my words,—artisans, mechanics manufacturers, labourers, and an army of poor martyr-faced curates, praying of them to think o' those who did all God's work in the church—haven't these conservative cormorants stood with a supercilious deaf ear to my entreaties, swearing allegiance over the crown, in order to help themselves with the gold that over-flowed even the vast measure of its preposterous * * *?

A BRICK. And, by the mass, your big rogues, the Tempestornian nobles, have cut us off from their feelings, as nate as a whistle! and now we'll sarve them the same in matter-o'-fact,—tunder and turf!—down wid the Union to' the bottom o' the emerald sea!

VOICES. The divell fly fast away wid your lying Union!

FAT JAQ. It will grieve my soul to lose you, but what's to be done?—I can't blame you. You're treated most infamously; but you see how they treat *me*!

VOICES. We do! we do!—if you choose to bear it, be jazes *we* won't!

1ST BRICK. (*with a mournful brogue.*) Och! and blythe was the day my mother sent me clane and nate out o' the cabin in a gentayle new suit, wid the time o' day in my pocket—and it's dirty I shall go back. Besides that same ticker in my fob, I had money and rings, and a sartin-sure five acres of grayne faylds, all in lovely flower, so soon as I raached the age of manhood ; and plenty of—

FAT JAQ. Come, come ; I can't believe all this you know.

1ST BRICK. (*sadly.*) Och ! 'twas true for me.

MANUFAC. (*clamorously.*) What's to become of us and our families!—we can get no work, and no food?

FAT JAQ. No food at *all*!—but I begin to find there are many thousands in the same situation. By the lord, I'm not without fears that I shall soon be in the same plight myself, with all that belong to me !

Enter COCKNEY, smoking a cigar.

ALL. You will ! you will !

COCK. I'll bet you a tanner he won't though ?
—what is it ?

A BRICK. Fait, mister Jaques, times have ex-

parienced the divell's own alteration wid you Once,—it's a long while ago,—you could plaise your dillicate pallate wid all the swate illigancies o' the saison and out of saison ; you indulged in your poetical fancies for delightful rarities, frequently ordering for your dinner a young jackass and sausages, or a chimney-sweeper stuffed with ten crows ; but now, by my sowl !—

ALL. (*vociferously.*) Very true,—very true,— Oh, you gormandizing fellow !—but you're brought to short commons now !

MASON. This way, my lads o' the Emerald Isle ; let's lave this old gintleman, who won't help himself or us from slavery, so long as he can get enough to ate and drink !

[*Exeunt PATLANDERS.*

FAT JAQ. I see my errors ; I see how wrong I have been—my eyes are opened now—I have come to my proper senses at last.

MANUFAC. AND LABOURERS. So have we !— but what shall we do for bread ?—It's of no use to apply to the parish, or anywhere else,—we're called impostors, till we're stone dead.

FAT JAQ. Something shall and must be done !

Cock. (*throwing down his cigar.*) Something else must now be done !

[*They all range themselves round FAT JAQUES, who acts as Leader of the Chorus.*

CHORUS;

I do object to starve !

We, one and all declare upon our oaths—
And thus we miserable men on ragged knees,

Now plight our keen-felt troths—
That far from having meat to carve,
Or e'en a quarten loaf to halve,
Or share in slices ;

Much less the dreamy luxury of smelling cheese ;
We have not had a wholesome meal this month !

But we protest
That our distress and wild unrest,
Though *preached at* by fat heroes of the Tenth,
And our unnumbered woes
And wants, of food and clothes,
Are not so many *vices* !

I do object to feed the men who starve me,
Yet if I do not work, threaten to halve me !

I will be rather slaughter'd—
Hung, drawn, and quarter'd—
Than longer be the horse denied his corn,
His water, and his grass ;

Yet whose bare ribs are lash'd to toil each morn,
 With no more strength than in an empty basket,
 To make vast wealth—bread, meat, and well-filled
 flasket—

For some hereditary ass !

This is the simple question :

Are we born slaves, or free ?
 In this immense white nation,
 Worse than the blacks o'er sea ?
 If slaves—where is our portion
 Of beast-of-burden food ?
 If free—give us the option
 Of choosing masters good :
 Give all the right of voting
 For men who will uphold—
 The justice of our having
 The *filings* of our gold.
 If labour is not gold, I swear
 There is no other coin,
 For all the crowns that sovereigns wear
 Are Labour's “right divine.”

(*Shouts at a distance.*)

COCKNEY. Here's the police coming !
VOICES. Where ! let's be off—we shall be
 taken up as rioters.
FAT. JAQ. It is the police, I declare, as I'm a

sinner!—here they come! There's two or three soldiers among them! See, they're getting out their truncheons of office!

(The crowd shift about in confusion.)

A MANUFAC. What's their office to us? An't we Tempestornians born as well as they? Their office makes no difference!

FAT JAQ. Oh, but it does though!—here they come pell-mell at us—don't you see the King's arms? I dare say they've got written orders for all this in their pockets!

MANUFAC. Down with them!

COCKNEY. Let's get some flag-stones, and crack the raw lobsters!

Enter a posse of POLICEMEN. They rush towards the Crowd.

SEVERAL VOICES. Stand fast; down with them!

[Police charge the crowd, who all take to their heels, in disorder. Many are knocked down with fractured skulls and broken arms.]

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

A LARGE LAWN, EXTENDING ALONG ONE WING OF THE
PALACE OF LORD NORMANRUST—TIME, NIGHT.

*Enter LORD NORMANRUST, abstractedly. He is clad
in complete armour.*

LORD NORM. Our years roll onward, cloud
succeeding cloud,
Tempest and calm—gloom and celestial light :
Spring in her verdant robe, with dews besprent,
Glistening in virgin purity, ascends
From our luxuriant earth, smiling sweet peace
Over the votive meadow-fields and woods:
Then Summer lifts his regal head, and shakes
From aurean locks broad sun-shine o'er our towers ;
Till Autumn with his honest visage comes,
Sturdy and harvest-bronzed, to bend the knee,

And downward turn his wreath'd horn's crimson
mouth,
Out-pouring fruits resplendent at our feet.
Then patriarch Winter's old heraldic shape,
Bearded with snow, grotesque, and rocky limb'd ;
Strikes with his ringing club the brittle earth ;
Sends anarchy into the forest wild ;
The mean hut desolates, the farm, the flocks
But howls excluded from the wassail hall !

[*Pauses awhile.*

Why should this good be marr'd ? Why should
men change,
By innovation's dangerous visiting,
These excellent arrangements of the world ?
As well admit a dragon to your house,
And not expect it soon to change its master
Who that hath sense can sleep i'the fold of peace
When war prowls round, like to a hungry wolf ?

[*Rests his chin upon one hand.*

I have been meditating if 'twere safe
Or rational to accede to man's desire—
And grant the people some few favours more
Than they possess at present ;—but I know

They are insatiate—whate'er they gain,
 More will be asked, till they throw off all shame,
 Like an old mantle—for 'tis now well rent,
 And thro' the gaps we see rebellion's flesh—
 And boldly seek for freedom in everything.
 It shall not—ought not—must not—cannot be !

[Pauses. Then lifts himself proudly, and continues.

Our ancestors, with firm commanding power
 United, urged the glorious car of day
 With conduct safe to its alternate goals.
 Let not a craven spirit then, infuse
 Adulterate yieldings in our purposes,
 That soon would prove us retrograde and weak,
 Changing our Order to a common sign
 For mobs to pelt at, feast there, or harangue ;
 (Inducing such equality i' the end,
 That we may e'en be jostled in the street
 With less excuse, apology, or awe,
 Than if we were some alderman or mayor ;)
 Or else by choosing the intermediate course,
 Half granting, half refusing popular claims—
 Which only acts as fuel to resolve—
 Lose in proportion our accustomed power ;

And thus disjointed, when strong tempests rise,
 Bring down our 'scutcheons' ancient blazonry
 In shatters to the dust—where lay our *heads* !

[*Gazes upward at the stars.*

Night, in her ebon mail, whose diamond studs
 Rivet in myriads those colossal folds,
 Recumbent on a heap of alpine clouds,
 Now gazes o'er our earth. Ye rolling orbs,
 That with unwasting urns of varied fire,
 Burn onward round the eternal Dial—worlds,
 Thronging perchance with life, yet to our ken
 Pois'd as the bright theogony of heaven,
 Circling the solar throne of Jove—how clear
 To mortal minds the emblem do ye show
 Of necessary magnitude and grades !
 Nerve then your souls, ye Tempestornian peers,
 And buckle on your bright ancestral mail !
 Stride through the capitol's Babylonian roar,
 In lofty scorn ; and when the struggle comes,
 Bethink ye of hereditary glories—
 Of well-won banners, vassals, and domains—
 Of God, our right, and of the stars above.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.

A NARROW COURT-YARD, AT THE BACK OF THE HOUSE OF
THE EARL OF OLDENVICE.—TIME, AS BEFORE.

Enter the EARL OF OLDENVICE. (looks upward a long while at the stars.)

EARL OF OLDEN. I wish I had the money that all those are worth !

[*Exit with a deep sigh.*

SCENE III.

INTERIOR OF THE HOUSE OF FAT JAQUES. FAT JAQUES AND MRS. JAQUES DISCOVERED SEATED BY A LARGE FIRE-PLACE, WITH A FEW EMBERS IN IT.

MRS. JAQ. I will not hear of it, Jaques, not for a moment ; these Political Unions, and Trades Unions, and Co-operative Meetings, are no good, depend on it. You're always getting yourself into

some scrape or other ; it 'll end in your ruin, mark my words if it don't !

FAT JAQ. Well, but my dear ! how can a man bear to be put upon as I have been all these years, and not resent it ; and with no chance of their behaving better, either ? Only think of the wretched state of bankruptcy to which all my sons, who are out in the world, have been reduced ! I can't do any more for them, and yet you want me to be quiet !

MRS. JAQ. It does not signify talking, Jaques, go you shan't to any more of these meetings ; they only unhinge your mind, and make you ill in body and temper, and fit for nothing. What you say about oppression and infamous treatment, and the remorseless covetousness of the nobles and clergy, may be all very true ; but you know, Jaques, they're *born* our betters, and—

FAT JAQ. No, I'm d—d if they are !

MRS. JAQ. Well, but it's no use to talk in that mad way : you're not a lord, you know, nor a duke, nor a bishop, nor any thing like one !

FAT JAQ. Thank God !

MRS. JAQ. (*earnestly.*) Now, *do* listen to reason, and mark my words if they don't come true. If you persist in these obstroppollous goings on, you'll be sent to prison, and stript of every individual thing you possess ; after which—

FAT JAQ. They'll take my skin !—nothing else left !

MRS. JAQ. Now don't go on so, dear ! No, they wouldn't flay you,—you'd be hung !

FAT JAQ. Humph ! Much obliged to them for such a proof of their gratitude,—and to you, too, for the prophecy.

MRS. JAQ. (*shrewdly.*) It's all very well, Jaques, these Unions and Meetings, for those who have nothing to lose ! But those who have——

FAT JAQ. Damme ! I've nothing *like* what I once had !

MRS. JAQUES. (*in a pacifying tone.*) I know that. I know it as well as you, Jaques ; all that you say is very true ; I know it's all true ; but then we have just enough to live upon, and maintain ourselves respectably ; and do for God's sake, my dear, let us keep this as long as ever we can !

FAT JAQ. Well, well, dear, you're right ; you're right ; I'll try to follow your advice as close as possible : children all a-bed, I s'pose ?

MRS. JAQ. Hours ago.

(*Loud knocking at the door.*)

FAT JAQ. Who the devil's that ?

MRS. JAQ. Oh ! Bull-street officers, I dare-say, or the police, come to take you for something !

VOICE OUTSIDE. Fat Jaques ! Fat Jaques, I say ! Why you're not gone to bed already, are you, old boy ? Open the door.

MRS. JAQ. I know the voice ; yes, I'm sure of it !

FAT JAQ. I an't, though !

VOICE OUTSIDE. (*speaking through the key-hole.*) I see you both, standing like two fools in the middle of the room ?

FAT JAQ. Ah ! Yes, I know who it is ; it's the Lord Jester of the Court ; let him in.

MRS. JAQ. I wonder what he's come for at this time o' night ?

(*They both run and open the door.*)

FAT JAQ. (*bowing low.*) Pray walk in, my lord.

Enter the RIGHT SILLY THE DANDY OF DERRYDOWN.

MRS. JAQ. (*curtseying very low.*) Welcome, my lord ! Would your lordship please to take a seat by the fire.

DAN. OF DERRY. (*holding his eye-glass down upon her.*) Thank ye, good woman—Ah ! Mrs. Jaques, I presume ?

FAT JAQ. (*bowing.*) Yes, my lord.

DAN. OF DERRY. (*with supreme affectation.*) Ah ! Pray don't let me put you out of your way at all. 'Tis a fine evening,—I've just left a rout, and discovered the air to be so clear and refreshing, that I alighted from my carriage, and actually walked unattended, except by one trusty valet, from the top of this street to your very door !

MRS. JAQ. (*differently.*) A fine star-light night, please your lordship, an't it ?

DAN. OF DERRY. Ah, *is* it indeed ? I never look up at such things ; the gas-lamps are kept in excellent order !—In honour's fair truth, I haven't seen the moon this whole summer. In winter, of

course, one has no chance. Ah ! Jaques, my man, my good man, I have some private conversation for you. You've been much annoyed and vexed,—and, ah ! they *do* say, taxed ; and you've not been treated with the respect due to your industry and many excellent qualities,—ah !

FAT JAQ. (*a little confused.*) I'm sure, I—I really feel deeply obliged by your kindness, my lord—really I——

MRS. JAQ. Yes, that we do, your lordship ; poor Jaques *has* been very much troubled of late.

DAN. OF DERRY. Well, never mind, good folks, there will soon be a stop put to these little *et ceteras*. His Grossness, the Duke of Bloodmandorf, and his Expediency the Duke of Bagnetlodge, at the express desire of her Tartness the Queen, have sent me to look into your affairs.

FAT JAQ. (*quite overcome.*) Have—have—(*recovering his breath*) *have* they indeed !

MRS. JAQ. (*much flustered.*) Bless them all, say I ; God save the King, and the Queen, and all the Royal Family !

FAT JAQ. I'm really deeply overcome by their

condescension. What may be their commands to me?

DAN. OF DERRY. In the first place, in consideration of your long and faithful services, it has been determined that you shall receive the order of Knighthood; to descend also, to the male heirs of your family, who shall hereafter be known by the title of Sir John-Bull Jaques. *(bows low.)*

FAT JAQ. *(astounded.)* Can this—can these noble tidings—*can* they be true?

MRS. JAQ. And I be my Lady John-Bull, too!

DAN. OF DERRY. *(bowing most respectfully.)* And your ladyship's eldest daughter, also. *(to Jaques.)* But step aside with me a minute, Sir John-Bull, as I have another little matter to transact with you, by order of the Queen.

(JAQUES bows to the ground, and they go to a table at the opposite end of the room.)

MRS. JAQ. *(aside)* How right I have been all along in my advice to Jaques! I always told him to keep himself quiet, and not mix in politics, and attend radical meetings, and something would

be done for him, some day or other. If he hadn't followed my advice, we should all have been shut up in a flea-breeding prison by this time, without a sixpence to help us out, or keep us comfortable in. *Now, what a change has happened!* He to be Sir Knight, and I My Lady, and our descendants to bear the same title in a generalogical stream down the long posteriority of our future line! I dreamt the other night of walking in a garden full of the tallest hollyhocks, all in flower; and I was just picking one to place in my bough-pot, when I awoke, and found myself pulling off Jaques's red night-cap by its tassel; and says I directly, this dream argues——what in the world is Jaques signing at that table? (*advances a pace or two nearer.*) What papers can those be that his lordship has just put in his pocket? The dockyments for our title, I suppose; and yet—

DAN. OF DERRY. (*advancing carelessly.*) Good evening to you, Mrs. Jaques; pleasant dreams to your Ladyship—*fal la! de ra!*

[*Exit singing, and shaking JAQUES by the hand indifferently.*

FAT JAQ. (*exultingly.*) Now we shall see on
 the next Lord Mayor's day,
 Whether I dine or no ! Now, there's no doubt
 But they will send an invitation,
 Full of sweet words, as plums in their best pud-
 ding,—
 The rich one, black with brandy, next the Mayor.
 But 'tis not certain now, unless much pressed,
 That Sir John Jaques will go !

MRS. JAQ. What papers were those you signed?

FAT JAQ. Some of the patents for my title ;
 the rest I had not time to read ; besides I could
 not, they were so cramply written.

MRS. JAQ. But you didn't sign *them* ?

FAT JAQ. Yes, I did ; his lordship said it was
 necessary that the court should know if I still had
 enough property to support the title ; and I imagine
 those papers were the estimate, which they knew
 well enough where to find ; as I saw the words
 'manufactories, farms, coal-mines, shops, ships,
 merchandise, three per cent. consols,' and such like,
 sprinkled about. And so I put my name.

MRS. JAQ. (*misgivingly.*) They must have

been sprinkled very thick for you to have seen so many in so short a time, in a hand writing you could hardly make out !

FAT JAQ. (*with a straitening face.*) That's true—what are you thinking at ?

MRS. JAQ. (*abstractedly.*) His lordship called me Mrs. Jaques as he went out !

FAT JAQ. (*eagerly.*) Yes, and your Ladyship too !

MRS. JAQ. (*fearfully.*) And then he sang *false riddle* !

FAT JAQ. (*in perplexed alarm.*) Well, wha—what o' that, you fool ?

MRS. JAQ. (*earnestly.*) And you signed your real name to all those papers ?

FAT JAQ. (*turning pale.*) Yes, to be sure,—I believe so—F. Jaques,—he told me !

MRS. JAQ. (*turning pale.*) Yes !—

FAT JAQ. (*foolishly.*) Ye—yes, he did !

[*They stand opposite each other, pale and confounded. Scene closes.*

SCENE IV.

ST. CONSERVATIVE'S PARK; TIME, DAY-BREAK.

Enter the DUKE OF BAGNETLODGE.

DUKE BAGNET. 'Tis true a crown's a toy;

but high ambition

Is like a child, until that toy's obtain'd.

Events now float it tow'rs me: one more reach,

And I could * * * *, methinks;

Yet should a sudden heave o' the mass of things,

Bear it a span beyond, I then should lose

My balance, and fall headlong in the deep.

Caution's a fool sometimes; the * * * is mine

(*sardonically.*)

To all *intents* and *purposes*—the hour

Is near at hand, and shan't be miss'd.

Enter the DUKE OF BLOODMANSDORF.

DUKE BLOOD. Good morrow,

Most noble duke! I came to seek you here.

DUKE BAGNET. Aught fresh, beside the morn ?

DUKE BLOOD. Yes, and worth knowing.

King Anchorbroke, with whom I supped last night,
 Being well plied by me with foaming cups,
 And lost to reason as the morn drew on,
 Between strong hiccoughs, jests and sea-songs coarse,
 And ludicrous efforts at collectedness,
 Blurted all secrets out.

DUKE BAGNET. He has not many
 Intrusted to his care ; and of these few,
 The most important are to me conveyed—
 Sink in my thoughts, then buzz within his ear.
 Say, are they worthy mention ?

DUKE BLOOD. I think they are,
 And of your prompt arrangements. With fresh dogs
 The king being hunted, worried, and confused,
 Not anxious for Reform, yet fearing tumult
 And popular convulsion, seems resolved
 Huge taxes to repeal, and mulct the church ;
 Whereby the people, with a loud acclaim,
 Will host him to fresh favour !

DUKE BAGNET. Humph ! proceed.

DUKE BLOOD. Then will the people, never satisfied,

From step to step advance, thrusting the king
 Like to the covering of a sacred shield,
 Made from a sign-board, in their crowded van,
 Accumulating thus propulsion strong
 On his own primal movement; so that he
 Cannot in common honesty recoil.

DUKE BAGNET. Good: but what evil do you
 thence foresee?

DUKE BLOOD. The worst. All taxes of the
 working classes

Will gradually be reduced; their strength
 Of mind and body, with abundant food
 Will fearfully increase; the spirit of change,
 And love of liberty, are now abroad,
 Which, if not stopped, will, like a sweeping flood
 Poured over vineyards, gardens, parks, and meads,
 Reduce all property to a level surface.
 Equal taxation saps the nobles' power:
 We cannot stand unless on 'vantage ground.'

DUKE BAGNET. Aye, aye, all this is clear; but
 I deny

The evil you predict : 'tis not an evil
 Until it come to pass ;—we'll see to that.
 Let the king sweep off taxes ; 'tis no more
 Than I myself would do, if premier ;
 Placing them elsewhere—on the people still—
 Let the Wigs crow and victual, victual and crow ;
 One thing is certain—we must make a stand
 Against all *real* innovation—
 Against all actual freedom—thus to * *
 The People to * * * * ; then the king,
 Driven on before them like a schoolboy's hoop,
 Must crack or spring ahead ; at the long bound
 We'll catch him. For the rest, my plan, thou
 know'st,
 Though well matured, is not yet ripe ; but sleep
 Thou in security, and take thine ease,
 For on thy brows the * * * will soon be placed.

DUKE BLOOD. Enough, great captain ; on thy
 steady sight,
 Strong nerves, decisive movements, and true love,
 My hopes and confidence are firmly built.

DUKE BAGNET. Hath the Fool Derrydown
 returned ?

DUKE BLOOD.

I know not.

DUKE BAGNET. I think he must ere this : let's
to his house,

And we shall take him in's fine lace-edged sheets.

[*Exeunt.*

S C E N E V.

A NARROW DIRTY STREET.

*Poor People with fruit-barrows, baskets of cakes, nuts,
fish, &c.*

Enter some COALHEAVERS.

FISHWOMAN. Any fish this morning, sir?—you'll find them very nice and fresh—this is all their nat'r'al stiffness—no skewers run up along the back-bone : the real freshness of the gills—they hav'nt been washed with blood to redden 'em—these here eyes, what look so bright, are all their own—I doesn't do as some people do, goes and buys fish what are cheap in the market, and cuts out their fresh eyes to put into the ungodly heads

of other stale fish what's expensive. Yah ! keep your backy-smoke to yourself !

COALHEAVER. (*laughing.*) Don't you like smoke ?

FISHWOMAN. Not from sich as you.

COALHEAVER. What d'ye mean by that, you ugly old skate-faced psalm-singer ?

SEVERAL VOICES. Go along with you all, you devil-gender'd set of cubs. Go and smoke Sal o' the barge.

Enter two of the MASTERS JAQUES, with slates and green bags, on their way to school.

ELDEST BOY (*to a BASKET-WOMAN*). A pen'orth o' nuts, please ?

WOMAN. Yes, I'll run and fetch the measure —I've lent it to a man close by—if you'll wait.

BOTH BOYS. Very well. Yes, we'll wait.

Enter an OLD MAN with a small basket.

OLD MAN (*to the COALHEAVERS*). Shrimps, gentlemen ?

A COALHEAVER. Let's look at 'em, old chap ?

OLD MAN. They're werry fine, gentlemen.

COALHEAVER. Ben, you've got a ha'penny, and I've one; let's have a pen'orth a'tween us.

OLD MAN. Yes, gentlemen, to be sure.

COALHEAVER. Come, heap up—good measure—there's your money, old cove.

OLD MAN. Thank ye, gentlemen.

Enter another MAN with a basket.

MAN (to the COALHEAVERS). Any Chelsea buns, my rum-uns?

COALHEAVER (sternly). Keep a civil tongue in your head ven you speaks to customers.

MAN. Well then, my coves?

COALHEAVER (indignantly). Who do you call coves!

MAN. Why, where's the harm?

COALHEAVERS. We'll show you, you sarcy rascal! *(They kick him out.)*

Re-enter WOMAN.

WOMAN. Here's the measure. A pint, did you say?

MASTER JAQUES. No, a pen'orth.

2ND MASTER JAQUES. But are they real Barcelona ones?—not from our own woods?

Enter two POLICEMEN.

POLICEMAN (*authoritatively*). What, I've caught you all here again! Come along to the station-house. Be off, boys!

(*Pushes the youngest MASTER JAQUES, who tumbles into the gutter.*)

2ND POLICEMAN. Come, you with the fish, and you with the basket of nuts, and you there with the fruit, and the rest of you—come away along with us directly.

MASTER JAQUES. What did you push my brother down for, you great brute?

PCLICEMAN (*slaps his head*), Hold your tongue. I'll serve you the same.

MASTER JAQUES. What right have you to hit me? I am one of the sons of Mr. Jaques. He's got a crab stick at home!

POLICEMAN (*shaking him*). You and your brother shall come too.

FISHWOMAN. You set of ungodly monsters, to take honest people to prison for no offence ! I wish heaven may send down brimstone and fire upon you, and turn you all as black as coals !

(*They begin to drag her away, with several others.*)

FRUITWOMAN. Oh, let me once get out of prison, this shall be a lesson to me ! Oh, my poor children at home ! 'Send I had but taken to thieving for you in time ! I should not then have been dragged away to prison, there to reproach myself for being innocent against all reason !

OLD MAN. I've done no harm ! I've done no harm !

POLICEMAN. (*brutally*). Come along, I say.

A WOMAN. (*struggling*). Oh the infamous magistrates of Babylon ! that parish-bane, Mr. Blight ! that pauper bully, Joskins ! that man-trap, Mr. Diggary ! that body without a heart, Mr. Hookem Walky,—he who told my starving sister and her child, that it was all *cant* and *sham* ! What chance has honest indigence, when judged by wealthy knaves ?

A COALHEAVER. She shows fight better than the old fish-fag. Don't hurt the woman.

[*Exeunt, COALHEAVERS after them.*

SCENE VI.

A FIELD NEAR THE SUBURBS.

Enter LORD BUSBY and an INCENDIARY.

LORD B. I heard you make the arrangements with your accomplice ;—the fellow who is just turning round that low hedge yonder. It avails you nothing to deny the charge; it only adds more falsehoods to your life's long catalogue.

INCEN. I dare say if your catalogue, in that way, was measured, it wouldn't be a mere cat's-tail in length.

LORD B. No doubt every man has his share to answer for, but do not forget the difference between one cat's-tail and *nine*!

INCEN. I didn't know who you were, when you first spoke; your present tender hint, however,

refreshes my memory of your face, and tells me I am at the mercy of the great National Schoolmaster.

LORD B. You are right ; and mercy shall be shown, provided you do not persist in these outrages. Beware of the Schoolmaster !

INCEN. He ought to protect and justify me.

LORD B. How so ?

INCEN. He set me to the work !

LORD B. What, to fire barns and hay-ricks !

INCEN. Or any thing else, that did mischief to monopolists' property.

LORD B. Explain yourself, my man. How did the Schoolmaster teach you to do such things ?

INCEN. He taught me to *think*.

LORD B. Humph !—go on.

INCEN. He supplied me with cheap knowledge, such as I had never before dreamt of ; and the novelty of learning histories of how the world had been governed all its life, in different countries ; and how the people had always been treated ; and how they sometimes resisted their tyrants, and played the very devil with their oppressors ; made

me think over these matters continually, and compare my own state and the state of Tempestorn, with others ; and so I determined to follow good example, and play the devil with our oppressors here ! Every one should exert his best efforts in the cause of thorough-going practical Reform. Some give arguments, who can get a hearing for them ; others, who cannot argue, show their minds in action ; and those who can argue, but can get no means of being heard, join hands with the latter. Thus a few administer the strong physic of reason and exhortation ; the many let blood, blister, or cauterise. So you see, sir, what with one thing and another, the sheep-shearing conservatives are in a seasonable way of being silenced, tapped, fleeced in their turn, and finished.

LORD B. (*after a pause.*) You have nothing more to add, I presume ?

INCEN. Nothing particular. For my own part, being among those whose reasons have no trumpeter, I am bound in duty to do my best, according to my own sphere of action ; and so I contribute a little bit of incendiарism now and then, as often as

I think my neck can safely afford it (for I'm not like a cat, who has as many lives as the tails you hinted at); and my donation may be considered as a sort of widow's mite, which I hope may prosper by stirring up the spirit of others in the same way.

LORD B. (*aside*). This is candour, with a vengeance! Half a dozen hungry men like this, whose rude strong powers of thought and action are so sinuously balanced that each can equally support the other, or take its place and go alone, are enough to overturn any state in the world, in disturbed times. (*aloud*) So because you are given knowledge and taught to think, you set yourself to do all manner of mischief, by way of showing your gratitude? You might as well argue a right to commit murder, because the Creator had given you arms and strength!

INCEN. So I have, in self-preservation.

LORD B. If any one offers you violence, you have the laws to fly to!

INCEN. The tax-gatherer and the parson offer me violence: they rob me of that which should procure me bread. Instead of my flying to the

laws for protection, the laws fly at me, like bulldogs that my oppressors set on. Do you think I will work and be starved, to support great land-owners and fat monopolists of all ranks and classes? You have taught me too well.

LORD B. You misapply the knowledge I have given you. You are young in thought, and must not act until you arrive at maturity.

INCEN. Teach me, then, a proper application; and please to begin by giving me work, and suffering me to keep enough of my earnings to live upon. I can't argue the question beyond this point; nor ought any man, if he could.

LORD B. Would you have the blackamoor washed white in an hour? Would you have centuries of abuses ground young again and purified, as rapidly as imagination sees it done? Why should you, whose mind has only just learned to walk, endeavour to seize upon the horses of the sun, and begin to prove your ability by setting the world on fire?

INCEN. All this may be very fine, and quite true; but my truth, though in a vulgar corporal

way, is as good as yours. I am willing to work :
I must eat.

LORD B. Well, well, of course, my man ; there's no doubt of that. Here, take these five sovereigns, and go and get yourself some food and fresh clothes, for you appear to have seen better days. Depend upon it things will be rectified in due course, and the country will see prosperous times. Doubtless, you are acquainted with a great many men, who are pursuing the same mistaken line of conduct as yourself. Talk with them—reason with them—show them their error—and if you cannot dissuade them from these acts of violence, let me know who they are, and *I* will talk to them.

INCEN. Well, my lord, I thank you kindly for your advice ; and I do admit I may have been in some error. 'There's nothing like talking to principals. I have learned more from your lordship in these five minutes, than from all the works that have issued from the press ; whether really yours, or those of spurious schoolmasters. I'm sure I have no wish to lead an abandoned life, and I do begin to see that matters really are mending, and

the country will soon be free and happy ; and if, as your lordship recommends, I can persuade any of those misguided men to leave off their evil ways, I certainly will do so ; and if they will not listen to reason, why then they must take the consequences.

LORD B. Humph ! good day, my friend ; remember my injunctions. If you have a wife, go home to her.

INCEN. Most certainly, my lord ; and God bless you, and thank you.

LORD B. You are very welcome.

[*Exit LORD BUSBY.*

INCEN. This is the best day's work I've made this many a long year. How bright the sun shines on that hedge ! it seems almost on fire. Is that a goldfinch I hear singing ? No, it's a linnet. How pleasant the fields look, even at this time of the year !

[*Exit.*

SCENE VII.

A STREET IN THE SUBURBS.

POLICEMAN. (*to some ragged people.*) Come, get up from that step, and march this way, along with the rest !

A MAN. (*in astonishment.*) We've been committing no offence !

POLICEMAN. What are you doing here ?

SEVERAL. Nothing ; we're doing nothing !

POLICEMAN. Then I must take you all as vagrants.

SEVERAL VOICES. We've not been trying to sell anything ; we have nothing to sell ! And we have not been begging !

POLICEMAN. Are you quite sure of that ? Didn't I see you begging a little while ago, in the other street ?

SEVERAL VOICES. No, no, indeed, we have not ; though we are quite destitute.

POLICEMAN. (*eagerly.*) Destitute ! come along !

ALL. (*imploringly.*) What for ? what for ?

POLICEMAN. (*exultingly.*) You're quite destitute, that's enough for me ; come along !

(*Drags them away.*)

A MAN. (*significantly*) I'll not be destitute again, when I once get out of prison !

[*Exeunt with the POLICEMAN.*]

Sound of rough music outside. Enter LORD SLIDER, playing upon a pipe; MR. PULLET with a tabor; and several M.P.'s, performing upon the tongs and the bones, leading on a Wedding Party, with morris-dance, &c.

MR. PULLET (*singing*).

Oh, happy hour of jocund wedding !

The aspiring Tile-maker has caught her ;
He reach'd her ere she gain'd the leading,
And won the Candle-maker's daughter !

LORD SLIDER (*singing*).

Soap-boilers too, with spirit new,
Blacking and pill-puffers in papers,
Insurance brokers, laundress-soakers,
May inter-marry, and cut capers,
Divine Reform to them revealed,
Has taxes from their trades repealed.

CHORUS, *with dancing.*

Then glory to the great Reform,
 Which noble Wigs have brought about:
 The gallant pilots of the storm,
 Who thus begin in proper form,
 Nor heed the hungry rabble-shout.
 For they have lighten'd thus our pains,
 And very properly, I trow,
 By doubling all our patriot gains,
 Have taught their protégés to crow ;
 Cock-tailed a few with hot spiced porridge,
 And left the tax on Corn and Knowledge,

[*Exeunt, dancing.*

SCENE VIII.

A LONELY STREET OF EMPTY HOUSES.

Enter a RUINED GENTLEMAN and his WIFE.

GENT. (*folding his arms gloomily.*)
 Nought more remains to try—I have tried all.
 Early and late, since ruin swept our home
 With less compunction than the moaning wind,—
 Which hath the sound of pity, and although
 It hath no heart, still seems a sufferer's echo—

Have I with indefatigable nerve,
 Patiently toil'd. After unnumber'd throes
 Of labouring hope and torture-wheel'd delay—
 The heart's roots strain'd to the utmost, clasping thus
 The birth and fate of each successive plan,
 That with fresh life commenc'd, and prospects fresh,
 But ended ever in the same dull corse,
 With mutes or mourners round—aghast we stand
 In hollow-eyed despair's exhaustion, fixed,
 Like wrecks acute of consciousness, between
 Necessity and impossibility.—

WIFE. (*fondly.*) Recount not, love, the miseries
 of the past,
 And all its harrowing trials ; rather turn
 This our last gaze upon those blissful bowers,
 Embalm'd with our first love ; there let us fix
 Our thoughts, and in deep feelings drown farewell.

GENT. (*abstractedly.*) The pen, the pencil,
 language, voice, and harp,
 We have tried all in vain ; what else remained,
 Except the spade ?—and what its use's gain,
 Unless I dig our graves ? Being in distress,
 And final pinch of want, it so falls out

That not one fraction of our utmost efforts
 Turns to the least account : while, if no need
 Oppressed us, not one fraction would be lost.
 Gold rains on golden industry; but turns
 To ashes, mockery, and sick despair,
 Upon his head who struggles with Starvation !
 Therefore—

WIFE. (*with a sad smile.*)

Oh, reason not unto the end,
 And wander round the outskirts of the deed
 We have resolved to do ; since it must be,
 Why should we add the bitterness of thought
 To all the countless preludes that have urged ?

GENT. (*abstractedly, after a pause.*)
 Our child is now in his third year.

WIFE. (*rapidly.*) Sweet love,
 Speak not of him—I cannot bear that thought !

GENT. (*gloomily.*) He must die too.

WIFE. (*clasping her hands.*)
 He must—we so agreed
 Last night, when crying with the lack of food,
 He could not sleep. (*solemnly.*) Soon will the infant
 sleep
 In our stiff arms locked fast—a final rest.

GENT. (*darkly.*) This morn, we have resolved,
shall be the last ?

WIFE. Fate points the way, having decreed it first.
Already do we feel the adder teeth
Of hunger, gnawing at life's inmost roots.
Would it were night-fall !

GENT. (*sternly.*) When the twilight haze
Obscures the vision's range across the park ;
Thickens the trees into a general shade ;
Confounds life's bodies with their peaceful trunks,
And hides (from such as might perchance pass by,
With eager pace to reach some happy home
Where waits a fond wife and the ready meal),
The harrowing cold expression of last looks
In those who seek their necessary graves—
We will escape this world ! We've seen the poor
E'en now dragg'd savagely to suffer law,
Imprisonment, or stripes, or heavy toil,
For their atrocious destitution. Mark !
We are exposed to the same infamy,
And fully qualified. Spirit of life !
Treasure, as thou might'st be, still thou'rt worth
nought,
When misery or disgrace poisons thy springs !

WIFE. Let's haste to where we left our child
asleep

In his exhaustion : to my bosom close
I'll hold him all the day, and at the hour
When moving tow'rds the watery shroud, prepared
By Providence for our extremity,
Our arms by turns shall press him to our hearts,
Until the moment when embracing close,
With him between, the welcome plunge we take.
Meantime, sweet love, o'ercome that darkening look—
Rack not thy sicken'd heart, now hope's no more ;
And with meek dignity thus hand in hand,
Until the evening brings eternal rest,
We'll wander through this vacant, exiled world.

(*He places his hand upon her shoulder, and after gazing some time at her, kisses her.*)

[*Exeunt slowly, hand in hand.*

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.

THE TEMPESTORNIAN HOBBY PALACE.

Enter KING ANCHORBROKE in a laced Morning Gown.

KING ANCHOR. Things are in a pretty d—d state—all wrong a'tween decks, and far from right above board. I'm not sure but the magazine will be fired, and we shall all be blown to matches and tinder ! The Quarter-deck nobles are now playing Tom Cox's traverse, and so are the mates and mids of the Main :—my precious soul ! but I wish I could clap a tackle round some dozen picked specimens of both decks, and bring the bulls' noses down to the ring-bolts ! How sharp the cat should sing in the air !—nothing like the *thief's-cat* for bringing rogues to their senses ! (*pauses.*) Don't like the aspect of things at all ! (*shrugs his shoulders.*) Weather black and squally overhead—hark ! is that the Queen's voice—or the shrill whistle o' the

wind? (*pulls up his trowsers.*) Don't know, and I don't care—not much. (*sighs.*) But what's all this? (*looking down at himself.*) I see in my haste to turn out, I've bent on her morning gown to my shoulders—here's a lot o' points and gim-cracks!—no matter, she often wears *my* canvass. Who's coming here so early?—old Bagnetlodge, I s'pose?

Enter EARL LOVEKIN, who salutes his Majesty.

KING ANCHOR. Ah! Lovekin, my boy, how d'ye do to-day—how's your wife?

EARL LOVEKIN. Well, thank your Majesty;
affairs of state

Prey not on ladies' constitutions.

KING ANCHOR. That's very true, Lovekin—I wish they did. But I'm afraid you're not very well yourself?

EARL LOVEKIN. I wait thus early on your Majesty,

In earnest hopes that—

KING ANCHOR. What can I do for you? (*laying his hand upon EARL LOVEKIN's shoulder.*) Can I do any thing for you, or any of your family?

EARL LOVEKIN. (*modestly.*) All are supplied ;
 but I would pray your ear
 To close attendance ; for the nation now,
 Like a vast whirlpool, threatens to engulf
 Both throne and church in its own wild descent
 To deep destruction. Therefore, your Majesty
 Must now be firm—the crisis is at hand !
 The people's cries are changing into threats,
 And if we do not soon ameliorate
 Their hard condition——

KING ANCHOR. Why, hasn't the wind chopped
 yet ? Swamp me, if I shan't be blown off my
 throne after all, like an old main-royal split to
 rags ! We havn't taken-in sail in time. If you
 officers of the watch, don't keep a sharp look-out
 a-head, we shall be right among the breakers
 before the squall lulls ; and then nobody will
 know the difference between me and Tom Pepper !
 What's that you say about the church, too ?

EARL LOVEKIN. They *must* reform themselves.
 This I have told them.

KING ANCHOR. Yes ; and I remember that
 one of the popular weekly newspapers—The New

Town-bell Messenger—compared your injunction to that of Don Quixote telling swab Sancho to flog himself ! I don't mean to compare *you*, though, to the Don.

EARL LOVEKIN. (*doubtfully.*)

Your majesty would not infer, I trust,
That I'm self-interested in my views ?

KING ANCHOR. No, to be sure not—you're above all that now—(*aside*) I think it's high time, the suck-Egg ! (*aloud*) Pshaw ! don't be so sensitive.

EARL LOVEKIN. (*diffidently.*) I am not, Sire—
save for the People's cries,
Whose spirit now condenses rapidly
In active Unions !

Enter QUEEN SINISTER with a sceptre.

QUEEN. (*contemptuously.*) Let the people cry ! Their insolent threats shall cause them groans beside.

How darest thou thus attempt to scare the king ?

(**KING ANCHORBROKE** *retires several paces.*)

EARL LOVE. (*soothingly*) Your gracious presence.

QUEEN. I will not be calmed !

Full well I know with earnest speech you come
 To urge the king in favour of the people,
 Who, with rebellious wishes, now yell forth
 Most treasonable words! Where is the king?

KING ANCHOR. (*from behind.*) Here.

QUEEN. Simon, stand forth, and say as now *I*
 say—

EARL LOVE. I do beseech you, Sire,
 To weigh my counsel ere the Queen's you take.

QUEEN. Audacious Earl!

KING ANCHOR. (*aside to Lovekin.*) Answer her
 sharply, sir.

EARL LOVE. Dread queen, the pitch of my
 audacity
 Must still fall short of words to answer *you*.

QUEEN. (*enraged.*) Dost thou retort on me!

EARL LOVE. Forfend it, Heaven!
 But your own wrath rebounds upon yourself.

QUEEN (*fiercely.*) I'll bear no more—begone,
 thou rebel lord!

EARL LOVE. Great lady, 'tis rebellion I would
 check,

And save your wrong head from the * * *

QUEEN. (*shrieking.*) Away! (*Darts towards him with the sceptre.*)

In mine own palace must I hear such words!

EARL LOVE. This is your husband's palace!

QUEEN. (*enraged.*) Madman! (*Strikes him on the head.*)

Take that and vanish!

EARL LOVE. (*reeling.*) Madam, spare my head!
Remember you may mercy need yourself!

QUEEN. (*furiously*) Away! away!

(*Drives him out.*)

[*Exit EARL LOVEKIN.*

KING ANCHOR. (*aside.*) Oh! that he'd rounded-to,
And pour'd a broadside!

QUEEN. Never see him more!
Expel that rebel from the cabinet,
Or I will teach you what it is to rule!

[*Exit QUEEN SINISTER abruptly.*

KING ANCHOR. (*solas.*) This is too much of a good thing—I only wish I had her out at sea—I'd soon teach her manners after we'd got into

blue water!—I'd make her learn to know the Lord's anointed—*what* a fire-ship it is! But it don't signify talking: Fat Jaques, with his fleet of dismasted sons and relations, must have something done for them before they get quite outrageous—in fact I begin to be afraid old Jaques is so already; and if all I've recently heard be true—or half of it—I shouldn't wonder if he heads a mob before long to do some serious mischief.

Enter LORD BUSBY, in a black robe.

KING ANCHOR. Welcome, great Schoolmaster—I'm very glad you are come—I wish you had dropt in a little sooner, to have helped Lovekin—we have had a precious scene!

LORD BUSBY. The pressure of the time claims instant thought,

Decisive to the point.

KING ANCHOR. Very true; so it does. Did you ever know a man so tormented as I am by my domestic affairs, and at such a trying moment? We've had a rare conflict just now. The queen actually beat Earl Lovekin out of the chamber!

LORD BUSBY. Your majesty will please you
bear in mind

That on the coming session much depends.
Important are the measures to be brought—
Important to be passed : they'll be opposed
By all the force of the concentrate Blocks.

KING ANCHOR. Ah, I expect so—I fully ex-
pect it—sad dogs ! How's Lady Busby ? You've
breakfasted, I suppose ? Eh ! have you ?—ready in
a minute ?

LORD BUSBY. The people's groans destroy my
appetite ;

Excessive occupation wears my frame :
I may not last much longer : therefore, sire,
It is my earnest wish, while yet I can,
To make victorious struggle for the poor,
And cast as many of their burdens down
As may be done with safety to the state.
Too tardy we have been—evaded much—
And disappointed fair expectancies,
Which I regret,—and own our odium just.
Abuses of the church, the laws, and all
The rasping vices of monopoly,

And other swoll'n hereditary wrongs,
 Must be reformed : the taxes must be shifted
 From corn and cottages to festal halls,
 And labour—worthy of its hire—be fed.

KING ANCHOR. Well, so it must ; my Speech
 Out o' dock yet ? By the by, I'm rather afraid we
 Shall have foul weather all the next —

Enter QUEEN SINISTER.

QUEEN. (*fiercely.*) Detested Busby—king-com-
 pelling lord !

Are we again within our palace gates
 The intrusive outline of thy parchment face
 So soon to see ? Its shadow on the wall,
 I from the window watch'd, and here thou cam'st,
 And recognised the evil one, its owner,
 Like a rhinoceros prowling on his way !

LORD BUSBY. Your Majesty is pleased to com-
 pliment.

QUEEN. (*lifting her sceptre*) Hence ! disap-
 pear—sink thro' the floor at once,
 Or I will brain thee where thou stand'st !

LORD BUSBY. (*sternly.*) Beware!—your Majesty
may chance o'ermatch yourself!

QUEEN. (*with fury.*) I'll crush thee to a cake!

LORD BUSBY. (*placing himself in an attitude
of defence.*) Lay on, Queen Duff! I've
beat thy husband's drum!

I'll flog, and leave thee—sans diaculum!

(*LORD BUSBY draws a large birch from underneath his
black robe. A contest ensues. The KING receives
many accidental blows from being in the way. The
scene closes; but terminates as it ought.*)

SCENE II.

A LARGE STREET.

Enter EDWARD CLEARSIGHT and JOHN EARNEST.

EDW. CLEAR. It certainly appears as though
the leading Wigs were resolved not to see the
necessity for effective measures.

JOHN EARNEST. And prompt ones.

EDW. CLEAR. Promptitude is also requisite ; but this includes great difficulties for Reformers to contend with ; and these difficulties the resolute opposition of the *Blocks* will render three-fold—and perhaps impossible to be overcome.

JOHN EARNEST. Without a severe struggle, of course, they cannot : but surely the Many, if they persist, must succeed against the few. A large swarm of bees must always overpower a small horde of drones ?

EDW. CLEAR. Passion, imagination, reason, knowledge, all that gives man supremacy upon earth, only renders the social state and balance more difficult to maintain. Can you balance an egg upon the four winds ? Your comparison with the bees is not metaphysical, I fear. Instinct, which our impertinence may call “ blind,” seldom errs in the question of self-preservation, and is always consistent.

JOHN EARNEST. Then we must halve the comparison, I suppose, and say that the *Blocks* are creatures of perfect instinct, and so far are bees ; but in all other points and purposes, are drones and hornets in bees’-clothing. But *can* the world be

so weak and ignorant as to suffer this to continue to the end of time?

EDW. CLEAR. I fear that bribery wins in the long run. Love of power, in some shape or other, is natural to all. Then mark the unity, concentration, and decision of the Blocks, compared with the hesitative demurs and half-measures, the paltering between the three-quarters and the whole of a thing, among the Wigs ; and with the vacillating dissatisfactions and veering attacks of many of the Radicals, who, at important moments, will often hang back from the common cause, or lie in ambuscade from each other, and rise unseasonably, and sometimes mischievously, at the incalculable signal of one man's private humours and opinions. But the Wigs are now in a very dangerous intermediate position. They stand with a rock in front of them, and a tempest behind.

JOHN EARNEST. This is the consequence and punishment of their want of a full heart in their cause, and a masculine will. But events and circumstances, which come crowding slowly on as dwarfs, now increase their bulk with their progress ;

so that we shall soon find a column of giants struggling in a pass for pygmies, and expanding like steam? The world never had such a *chance* before. Why, who's this!

Enter FAT JAQUES, foaming with rage.

FAT JAQ. Make room! make room! I shall burst! Oh that I could run into the midst of all my enemies, for I am like an overloaded gun! no need to swallow a match—their presence would make me explode! I am as a man that is ruined, and ruined, and ruined, and beyond redemption—nay, and I *am* that very man himself! Oh, sirs, to think—to think, I say—which is madness—that the greatest fool among all the Blocks should yet have wit enough to cheat Fat Jaques with his eyes open, and his very wife in the room, and defraud him of his *all*—in exchange for a Sir John-Bull humbug!

(Leans his head against a house.)

JOHN EARN. (to EDW. CLEAR.) Do you understand what all this means? A fresh fraud or extortion of the Blocks, I imagine, from the *old quarter*.

EDW. CLEAR. Have you not heard, then?

FAT. JAQ. O ! woods, and farms, and manufactoryes,
 Houses and ships, and debts, and ready-money !
 O ! consols, turnpikes, shares in canals and rail-
 roads !
 Farewell, a long farewell !—Fat Jaques is done for !
 [Exit FAT JAQUES, *clasping his forehead.*

JOHN EARN. The catastrophe is evident ; but who are the chief manœuvrers that have brought it about ?

EDW. CLEAR. Queen Sinister, with her co-adjudors, Dukes Bagnetlodge and Bloodmansdorf ; having a pressing occasion for heavy funds to meet the expenses of carrying on some secret plot they are thought to have in view, and which must be developed before long, or it will be rendered futile by discovery ; repaired to the Bishop of Babylon, as I learn, for his advice in the business, thinking, no doubt, to raise money from the church lands, or upon church security. The wily bishop, however, proposed a plan for inveigling Fat Jaques to sign away, root and branch, all the available property he

possessed. It was tried, and succeeded—as might have been expected.

JOHN EARN. It seems that no layman ever has a chance against clerical cunning; for if the two parties were equal, the latter would then bring heaven down all of a lump—without shame or conscience—and turn the scale at once! Wrong sinks heavy on the oppressed earth, and Right is jerked up to the moon.

Enter Mrs. JAQUES, armed with a broomstick, and driven by COCKNEY, in a cab.

COCKNEY (*pulling up*). Hi, misters! have you a-seen poor Mister Fat Jaques go along this here vay?

Mrs. JAQ. (*leaning half out*.) Pray, gentlemen, tell me have you seen any thing of my poor husband? —he's been ruined, gentlemen—entirely ruined by the Blocks, gentlemen—they contrived it, and sent the Lord Dandy of Diddledom to get poor Jaques to sign away his all! And now, gentlemen, I've just learnt that my two youngest boys are taken to the station-hous~~t~~, and have been before their worships, who have sentenced them to be whipped.

at the Old Belly, and to be imprisoned a month in the House of Correction, for no offence at all ! and I'm now going to try if I can get them off—what's o'clock, pray ?

COCKNEY. I see a clock there ! (*pointing up through some chimney-pots with his whip*)—there she is !

MRS. JAQ. And what o'clock is it by that ; for I can't see so far ?

COCKNEY. Oh, it looks gallus late !

MRS. JAQ. (*shrilly.*) But what *hour*, I say ?

COCKNEY. Oh, that ere clock's never right—we'd much better drive on, and ax ven we gets there.

MRS. JAQ. (*eagerly.*) Drive on there—give it him !

COCKNEY. (*lashing the horse.*) There, os—now you'll adwance a little beyond act-o-parlimint pace !

[*Exeunt MRS. JAQUES and COCKNEY in the cab, at full canter.*

EDW. CLEAR. Poor Jaques has chiefly got himself to thank for the oppressive and roguish manner in which he has been treated.

JOHN EARN. Yes ; but the depravity and remorseless selfishness of his oppressors, is not justified by his weakness and ignorance.

EDW. CLEAR. No ; I merely inferred that the latter accounted for the success of the former. Now, he's in a far most serious scrape than ever.

JOHN EARN. We must get him out of it !

EDW. CLEAR. If he will let us—we'll try our utmost. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

A BOUDOIR IN THE NATIONAL HOBBY PALACE.—TIME, NIGHT.

Enter QUEEN SINISTER, with the BARONESS OF BACCO, who is bearing a splendid bottle.

QUEEN. My spirit leaps this eve among the clouds,

Like a keen meteor. Funds we have obtained For our designs, and all will now work well.

BACCO. Der arch-duke Bagnetlodge vill soon be here.

QUEEN. Think not that I forget the appointed hour ;

I long to see him—the delay, though brief,

Frets me. Sing, Bacco, sing.

(*Takes the bottle from the hand of the BARONESS, and borrows an idea from it.*)

BACCO. Ah, shall I sing

Soam national song, our doves would moach delight
in ?

QUEEN. Do so—it savours well.

BACCO. Yes; 'tis der genuine—Oh, you mean
der song ?

Soam hunting song would most appropriate be,
Since we shall soon be out in full pursuit
O' der national *game*.

QUEEN. A seasonable jest.

Sing then a song of queens and nobles hunting.

(*Throws herself upon a velvet couch.*)

Song by the BARONESS.

Der dusky knight he ride doan from der sky,

And bring along after der morn;

Die dogs dey mak der cursedest cry—

Die dogs dey mak der cursedest cry—

Ven der trompeter spak mit his ho-er-or-orn,

Ven der trompeter spak mit his horn.

Den a hoanting ve vos go !

Den a hoanting ve vos go !

Vile der king he snore

Like a Babylon bore,

Ve'll spur o'er die nation's woe !

Die queen her much white arms she troes

Ronde her loafer to mak him stay :

Mine majesty, hark how it rains and it snows,

Mine majesty, see how he freezes and blows ;

You cannot honte to-day !

Boat a hoanting ve vos go ;

Togeder, togeder vos go ;

Vile der king he snore

Varra dronk on der floor,

Ve'll spur o'er die nation's woe !

QUEEN. You sing this foreign song most excellently ;

Your accent gives a zest. Is there no more ?

BACCO. Anoder verse, your Majesty. Ahem !

(*Spits on the carpet.*)

*Some dey ride horses, and some dey ride mares,
 And some dey ride foals just born ;
 My gootness ! how varra pleasant it vos !
 My gootness ! how varra pleasant it vos !
 To follow der trompeter's horn !
 Den a hoanting ve vos go !
 Den a hoanting ve vos go !
 Vile der king on der floor,
 Creep dronk on all-four,
 Ve'll spur o'er die nation's woe !*

QUEEN. I ne'er before my consort's language
 heard

With any pleasure. Hark ! our men approach.

(*Three taps are heard at the private door. The
 BARONESS opens it.*)

Enter the DUKE OF BAGNETLODGE.

QUEEN. Hail ! noble duke.

DUKE BAGNET. All-gracious lady, hail !
 (*they embrace.*)

QUEEN. Rides the tide high enough for our
 fresh launch,

As Anchorbroke would say ?

DUKE BAGNET. The popular tumult swells:

but not until

The general storm raves out, can we put forth
Our fresh-crown'd glories. (*Aside to the QUEEN.*)

Bloodmansdorf's at hand !

His heavy footstep on the lower stair
E'en now forewarn'd my ear.

QUEEN (*aside to the DUKE.*) Ensure his aid.

Let him suppose that I, as d—ager,
Will calm retire before his * * *

DUKE BAGNET. (*aside to the QUEEN.*)

He's primed already with 't—empty of charge.

(*A tapping at the door. The BARONESS opens it.*)

Enter DUKE BLOODMANSDORF.

QUEEN. Welcome, most royal duke !

DUKE BLOOD. Fair sister, thank ye.

(*embraces her.*)

(*To Bagnet.*) But no offence, I trust ?

DUKE BAGNET. Nay, none whatever.

DUKE BLOOD. How fares my charmer ?

(*embraces the BARONESS very familiarly.*)

BARONESS (*to the QUEEN*). No offence, I tink ?

QUEEN. No season this for further jesting :
speak,

Great brother ; is the hour of action near ?

DUKE BLOOD. Stronger resistance to the ——le's
claims

Is requisite, ere we can fire their blood

To violent acts, so patient is its current.

DUKE BAGNET. This we shall soon effect,
for they are ripe

At last. The nobles of our party now,

By stern pursuance of my clear commands,

Which tend to their own wishes, are quite ready

To fire the train. My plans are all laid down,

And for their execution, trust me.

QUEEN. Noble duke,
We do ; but I would fain be well advised
Of all your politic steps to meet the crash,
And fierce circumfluous pressure of the mass.
Sketch us thy policies ; be plain and brief.

DUKE BAGNET. I'll do so : here they are.

(*draws forth some papers.*)

DUKE BLOOD. Read them aloud.

DUKE BAGNET. (*reads.*) ‘The people are ripe for tumult, rebellion, revolution, or anything else, in consequence of the dearth of food. A staunch opposition to every measure for their better supply, will exasperate their passions; and a definite attempt to decrease the little they do at present possess, will drive them to open madness and violence, till the whole country rises. This is what we * * * ; their moral strength and persevering union is the only thing to be dreaded: we must provoke their utmost practical * * *. Their force will be met thus:—The army is true—except a few regiments;—the police are all true, a much larger body than is thought for; the navy, on the whole, is true, provided the men are at sea, close under the hand of their officers; but as sailors may be apt to side with their rebel countrymen if acting ashore, we’ll use them, together with the militia—on whom no dependence can be placed—in such a way, as to prevent them turning against our own men, while they serve as a cover to our movements, and a body of protection against which the enemy will pour their first onset, and assail with their

most desperate attacks. Then we have a host on the civil list. Out of 9000 lawyers, we may reckon that half will aid us, and the other half remain neuter; all the clerks in government offices are true; so are pensioners and sinecurists, with those in their interest, who, with a squad of gentlemen-cadets and others to lead them on, will make a capital body for my veterans to stand behind, till *their* turn comes. Then butlers, and stewards, and valets, are all true; so are coachmen: the footmen are all false. Gamekeepers are true; under-gamekeepers and grooms, half true and half false. Again, bankers and their *dependents* are all true; so are merchants, landlords, great manufacturers, land-owners, contractors, and large shop-keepers: the small and middling shopkeepers, unless compelled to act (a very bad plan, which the rebels will adopt), will all remain neuter to a man. We shall no doubt have good volunteers among the large gunsmiths, cutlers, master-tailors, and others; though all journeymen tailors, printers, bakers, &c., are as false as hunger and rags can make them. The whole race of shoemakers and cobblers

I believe to be thoroughly false to us ; but the average number are bald-headed politicians, too wise to fight. We'll secure, of course, all the large armoury and ammunition warehouses, and let the people rob the shops of the rest, which will send all these shop-keepers over to our side, and help to alarm all others for the safety of their property, such as bakers, butchers, &c. As to Fat Jaques, he is an odd fellow to deal with ; nevertheless I know how to manage him. A good soldier often makes a bad general. Thus, you see, making the undisciplined fight and play the fool *with* the undisciplined, while I keep my regulars in the back ground, standing attention, but as calm as carrots, till I see fit to throw them into the boiling mass by way of a great and expedient moral lesson——'

DUKE BLOOD. Enough, enough, arch-duke,
'tis a rare jest ;

But let us now——

BACCO. Die hour grow ferry late.

QUEEN. (*carelessly.*) Will it be requisite to slay
by thousands ?

DUKE BAGNET. (*with sangfroid.*) That depends

on how the people behave. As soon as any little accident has befallen the *** , who is by no means bullet-proof, you know—(*winking one eye*)—why then we'll try and appease the *canaille enflammée*. But if they won't be quiet, when we desire them, I suppose our soldiers must provide sinecures under ground for a few thousand or so. Not that I wish this—(*turning over his papers casually*)—not I, 'pon my soul—no treat to *me*—no novelty—like a biscuit to the king.

BACCO (*to the QUEEN*). Deze noble dukes haf not yet supp'd, me tink?

DUKE BAGNET. Yes, we have supp'd, fair Baroness, long since.

(*Rolls up his papers, and places them in his pocket.*)

DUKE BLOOD. (*leering at the BARONESS.*) I'm full of meat and wine !

BACCO. Full of der tyvel !

QUEEN. (*to DUKE BAG.*) We are well satisfied with these thy plans;

Bold have we found thee, politic and—

DUKE BAGNET. Mum !

(*The BARONESS extinguishes the lights, and the scene closes as they retire.*)

SCENE IV.

COFFEE-SHOP IN A BACK STREET. TIME—MORNING.

SOFT SMITH, ONE-EYED JONES, and JUG JERRY,
(who is asleep,) are seated at a small table in the farthest corner.

SOFT SMITH. I shall certainly go, Jones; I shall indeed. I always had a great predilection for private theatres. I have been excited by the performance of a deep tragedy in such places, till tears as large as hailstones rolled melting down these very cheeks.

ONE-EYED JONES. Tears of laughter, you mean?

SOFT SMITH. Of course: it's bad enough to have to weep at any time, *without* paying for it.

ONE-EYED JONES. Nevertheless, don't go to this place; can't we find plenty of amusement elsewhere! See, now, how pleasant a night we've spent, and at no great expense. I have a little bit of headach to be sure, and Jerry here, is dumb-fuzzled; but he's used to it.

JUG JERRY (*drowsily.*) I am so—used to it, as you say, my friend and pitcher.

SOFT SMITH. But tell me, Jones, why should we not go to this private theatre?

ONE-EYED JONES. I've heard that the chief piece to be performed, is a Political Oratorio—which is innovation; I know it to be from the pen of Poet Clinker—which is ticklesome; but a great many of the nobles will be there *incog.*—which makes it dangerous.

SOFT SMITH. I know Poet Clinker very well; a tall silence of a man, with a dark eye that goes through you like a shot!—unpleasant effect.

ONE-EYED JONES. I'm no great judge of eyes, but that's the man. He has peppered the Corn-laws with rhymes like chain-shot. Now you see, Smith, you being a lay-rector, and I enjoying a quiet pension, it is sensible, rational, wise, and moreover expedient, that we should keep our property as long as we can. But this period we shall shorten if we are seen attending these political gallimaufries.

SOFT SMITH. True, sage Solomon—but you are eating all the muffins. I am a lay-rector—an abomination to religion, I grant; still it came to me by inheritance, like any other property—I find it very comfortable—and I must do my best to keep it.

JUG JERRY. (*rousing himself.*) Some more muffins, there!—I haven't had a bit—and some coffee!

ONE-EYED JONES. Why, you couldn't eat and drink in your sleep?

JUG JERRY. No; but *you* contrived to do both while you were talking—(*loudly*) hillo! let us have some more muffins and things, will you?

SOFT SMITH. But then, Jones, I'm not a man without conscience, though I form one of the minor wheels of the machinery of abuse. I have a living worth two hundred a year: well, I can't preach myself—in fact, I don't even like to hear sermons—but I keep a good curate; an excellent one indeed, who never made a sermon, since I employed him, of less than one hour and three quarters long—and I allow him a third of the money. Now, that's behaving decent—don't you think so?

JUG JERRY. That comes of listening to the sermon *within*.

SMITH and JONES. Hear! hear!—well done, Jerry. (*clapping him on the back.*)

JUG JERRY. (*testily.*) Let me be; you make as

much fuss as if I only said a good thing once a year. For my part, I don't mind getting as drunk as a king at any time, upon any occasion ; and with any liquor ; and I shouldn't mind if I got as fat as a parson—but I feel what's right for all that ; and if you don't order some more muffins and coffee, on this seat I won't sit another minute !

(striking his hand upon the table.)

SOFT SMITH. (*calling*) Do, pray, be quick with those—Oh, here they are.

ONE-EYED JONES. Now, you see, Smith, in respect of this private theatre affair, I'm situated similarly to yourself. My pension, you know, is owing to the discovery I made of a huge fraud, when I was clerk in a Government office. If I had blabbed the affair, witnesses would have been bribed, and books lost, so that it would have done the public no good ; whereas, a pension being given me to *retire*—that did *me* good. But at this theatre we must not be seen. As to Jerry, *he* can go—it's of no consequence.

JUG JERRY. (*throwing down his muffin.*) Ah ! you mean to say that I'm nobody—or somebody worse!—you twit me with my occasional depend-

ence, but I'll no longer be under obligations to either of you.

(*rises and takes down his hat from the peg.*)

SMITH and **JONES**. No, no, no, Jerry ; nothing of the kind was meant—what the devil's the matter ?

(*they take his hat from him.*)

JUG JERRY. You're both lucky men, and I'm unfortunate rather ; but if I can by any means get a prize in the next lottery, I'll pay off all my obligations.

ONE-EYED JONES. Nonsense, Jerry, nonsense ! don't think of such things.

SOFT SMITH. Come, sit down, man.

JUG JERRY. (*sitting down.*) I can't go without my hat.

SOFT SMITH. But, Jones, I must confess—waiter ! more coffee !—I must confess I should like to hear this Political Oratorio.

ONE-EYED JONES. 'T won't do—there will be so many of the quarter-deckers there *incog.* We must not get in the way of the great wheels of Government, whether they move visibly or invisibly.

JUG JERRY. Then why shouldn't we three chum-wheels go there in *cog* too ?

SOFT SMITH. A capital idea—let us—eh, Jones?

ONE-EYED JONES. Humph!—Yes, we might risk it that way without danger. I don't know but it might add to the amusement.

JUG JERRY. What shall we do with ourselves to-day? There's a famous cricket match a few miles out of town, with jumping in sacks afterwards. You'll see Clinker there—a rare bat—in fact, he lives by it! It's all got up by a perfect, I may say a *radical* gentleman, who has a great respect for me. There's a large booth to be erected, and he will keep seats for three. Bless your soul, I'm as intimate with him as possible. I was in love with his sister many years ago: she's an old maid now, and has set up a virtuous pastry-cook's, in Thomas Street. You'll find no pretty attractive girls to serve tarts there, and seduce men into cheesecakes—always serves herself. I'm afraid she'll be ruined. But will you go to this match?

SOFT SMITH. (*rising.*) Oh no—we really must keep ourselves a little more quiet. It isn't because we now and then go out for a stroll round town, from dusk till dawn, to see the night-lions, that we

are not to have some little care for general appearances. We must keep up our respectability !

JUG JERRY. I shall go.

ONE-EYED JONES. I agree with you, Smith.

JUG JERRY. You always do, you fool !

ONE-EYED JONES. And *you* are old enough to be wiser, Jerry : besides, we want rest. Come, I'm off.

SOFT SMITH. And I, too.

JUG JERRY. Very well ; you to your beds, and I to the booth.

ONE-EYED JONES. When shall we see you again ?

JUG JERRY. Directly I come back : in the meantime, I recommend *you* to tumble into your hush-money'd bed, and there suffer for your country till dinner time, while Soft Smith is labouring with all his perseverance and energy to keep up his respectability.

SMITH and JONES. Ha ! ha !—good by, Jerry —take care of yourself.

JUG JERRY. (*grumpily*) My friend will see me safe on a shutter, if needful.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

A PRIVATE BREAKFAST-ROOM IN THE PALACE OF BISHOP BABEL. GOLD AND SILVER SERVICE PUSHED ON ONE SIDE, TO MAKE ROOM FOR NEWSPAPERS, WRITING MATERIALS, A LARGE BIBLE, ETC.

BABEL. Events roll onward tow'rd the precipice,

O'er which the infuriate mass will roll, while we
 The cool propellants, governing our force,
 Soon as the final shock ensures the effect,
 Rein up, recoil, and rear our fronts to heaven.
 In the convulsion Anchorbroke will * * * ;
 The Queen and Bagnetlodge are well agreed,
 Yet Bloodmansdorf is taught to expect * * * *.
 I know not how we four shall square i'the end ;
 But this I know, it matters not to me ;
 For, rise or fall who will, the Church must gain.

Enter a SERVANT.

SERVANT. My lord, there are several gentlemen in the hall, who wish to present a petition ?

BABEL. I am engaged and cannot see them.

[*Exit SERVANT.*

A Petition!—*that* savours of reform. We must keep down everything, even in the shape or shadow of amelioration, if we wish to produce the desired convulsion ourselves; and since it is very evident there must be a convulsion, it is most politic that we should be beforehand with the * * *; and by * * * it, however covertly, ourselves, we shall be so much in advance of them, as to our movements.—I feel very bilious to-day. How much annoyance these wretched people give us!

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT. My lord, they have sent up the papers to your lordship, saying they will return in a few hours for your answer.

(SERVANT bows low and retires.

BABEL. (*turning over the papers*) Ah! I thought as much—‘tithes’—um—a—‘enforcing tithes’—yes, the old story, of course—um—pshaw!—‘refusal’—‘destitute’—‘prison’—a—and all this string of signatures!—insolence!

(*Throws down the petition. Takes up other papers.*)

BAB. Changes rush staggering on—they'll right themselves

According to our impulse, or fall prone
Before our feet. We'll raise them on close terms.
Lovekin, disgusted at the Queen's offence,
And having drain'd his office to his ends,
Will soon resign or sink. It matters not.

Then Busby, with his bold colleague—what now?

Enter another SERVANT.

BABEL. Again with pauper pleadings crawl'st thou here?

SERVANT. My lord, there are some tradesmen in the hall, who wish to present you a petition from the Parish of——

BABEL. What! a second in one morning?—Tell them the Lord Bishop of Babylon is engaged, and cannot see them; but he vouchsafes them permission to leave their petition, if they think it worth while.

[SERVANT bows profoundly, and retires.

BABEL. (*pushing his papers aside spleenfully.*) These things fret one beyond patience. It is well the Earl of Trampleneck is not subject to these annoyances,—he would never contain himself.

Enter SERVANT with papers. He lays them down, and retires.

BABEL Yes, I thought so. (*glancing over them.*) Much the same as the last. Humph!—‘tithes’—a—‘poor laws’—‘church rates’—‘inequality of poor’s rates’—um—a—and all these signatures! I think the country is going mad as fast as it can. Rational men will soon sum up their account; and get it paid too.

(*A clamour of voices outside.*)

BABEL. Something else! This is unbearable. I’ll order my carriage, and take an airing.

Enter two SERVANTS with papers.

1ST. SERVANT. My lord, a great concourse of people have arrived in front of the Palace, and the foremost of them have forced their way into the hall. They insisted on our bringing you these petitions, and for fear of violence we obeyed, not having your commands to the contrary.

(*The BISHOP OF BABYLON, after a stern pause, points haughtily for the papers to be laid on his table.*)

[*Exeunt SERVANTS.*

BABEL. (*tearing open the papers*) ‘poor’s-rates,’ ‘Church-rates’—um—a—‘tithes’—‘poor-laws’—‘work-house’—‘destitution’—‘deaths’—‘prison’—(*rises fiercely, and sweeps the papers and large missal off the table.*) Accursed are the poor !

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT. Did your lordship call ?

BABEL. Order my carriage instantly, and send a messenger to the Duke of Bagnetlodge, saying that I fervently wish a rebellious rabble to be cleared away from the front of my palace !

[*Exeunt at opposite doors.*

SCENE VI.

A STREET.—A CROWD OF MECHANICS, MANUFACTURERS, RAGGED LABOURERS, AND OTHERS, ARE LISTENING TO A STREET-PREACHER.

PREACHER. (*with a desperate accent.*) And a more *especial* and *exceeding* measure of retribūtion shall fall upon the perverse *heads* of such as believē

not my words ! Even as the *measure* of your *iniquity* is full unto overflowing, so that the street gutters run with it in a *stream* of rank *pollution*, and are dammed *up* with it in the very mud and mire of its abomination ; even so shall the capacious measure of *wrath* boil over like a *crater* !—and ye shall all be *hurled* into peculiar and unutterable destruction for the manifold *sins* of Babylon ! And ye shall all be *immersed* in the frantic waters of torment, till the effigies of human *souls* rise and sink in the confused *tumult* of insufferable agony, like bubbles on a boiling *caldron* !—and ye shall be *tossed* with the myriad points of *forky* execution, from one quarter to the other of the infernal realms ; like *hay* in summer ! And your endless torment shall be as an endless *harvest* to the devils of hell ! and ye shall—

SHOUTS FROM THE CROWD. Down with him ! Send him down first ! Who's going to be bullied in this way !

PREACHER. (*raising his voice.*) Oh, generation of vipers and *lepers* !—assuredly shall ye writhe among the *red-hot harrows* of perdition for all your evil doings !

A MEC. The day's gone by, gaffer, for all this stuff. We've found out that you, and the rest of your cloth, deal out common damnation for us all in the next life, just to keep this world as a trump-ace for yourselves !

Enter ROBERT VISION.

VOICES. Stop the parson's mouth with a handful of mud—it's as good as his words ! Let's hear Robert Vision.

A VOICE. And a very good vision too, if I've any eyes.

SHOUTS. Off with the parson !

ROBT. VIS. My friends, do not offer the man any offence ; perhaps he means well, though he may be rather too figurative.

SHOUTS. Stand up in his place, Robert Vision. Silence, to hear Robert Vision !

PREACHER. *Accursed* are ye all ! I will avoid further contamination.

[*Exit STREET-PREACHER.*

ROBT. VIS. I regret, my friends, that he is gone ; fair and open discussion could not have injured him. But since he has given you an ornamental address

on the subject of a direful hereafter, I will make an appeal to the direful present time.

(Stands upon a high step.)

VOICES. Silence, everybody ! No noise ! Don't crush so there !—Just take your elbow out of my ear !—I'll jam your ribs in, if you don't make room!—Silence, everybody !

ROBT. VIS. My good people, what need is there of all this irrational violence ; you may hear me speak any other day to the same effect. I now propose to make an address to Time.

CROWD. Silence !—Go on !—Order !

ROBT. VIS. Hard hearted father of the suffering years

That long have wail'd calamity and pain,
In echo of the ceaseless groans of Men,
Whose hopes, once wing'd with joyous birth-day
fire,

Soon fall, and midst life's refuse rotting lie ;
Whose love of truth and nature is beheld
With fear and odium ; their best feelings scoff'd ;
High passions branded, base ones only fed
By gen'ral suff'rance of the same dark wrong ;

Oh, pause upon the threshold of this hour,
And think of all thou tramplest under foot !

VOCES. Ah ! Let Time look to it,—and let us
be the foremost to look to it ourselves ; we are
indeed trampled under foot !

ROBT. VIS. The highest merit or the humblest
worth,

Both are crushed down by painted ignorance,
Or by the Serpent, wisest beast o' the field !
What spirits wrought unto the highest pitch,
By noblest gatherings through an ardent youth,
Pave thine infinitude of wreck-strewn paths !
For see, oh Time !—remorseless giant, see,
High hopes, like eagles dead, bestrew thy way !

A VOICE. (*in an under tone*) You see, Tom,
all one's likely to get by studying after hours !

ANOTHER VOICE. I shan't attend any more
debating clubs ; for I dare say I shan't be returned
for Parliament, a'ter all.

A VOICE. (*loudly*) Order, there !

ROBT. VIS. Behold the struggles of the human
heart

For happiness ?—the end is gall and tears !

A VOICE. (*in a low tone.*) Didn't I say so?

ROBT. VIS. Till blank despair fills up the cata-
logue;

And, losing all good faith and trust in Thee,
Since all the past is marr'd and crush'd alike,
The man sees nought before him but his grave!.

VOICES. (*with groans.*) True—true enough.—
Silence!

ROBT. VIS. The social scheme, thy long forth-
coming work,
Produced by labour thro' unnumber'd years—
Midst charity and mutual love? No, no!
Labours of ignorance for crafty vice;
Of weak-soul'd fear for superstition arm'd;
Labours of industry for avarice,
Of poor for passing rich—of fools for knaves.

VOICES. Win first, lose last: we're tired of
being fools.

ROBT. VIS. Mark now its finest pitch! The
finish'd trick
Of mechanised society, is screw'd
To the torn level, home. Mammon is god!
Giving the meanest pigmy of the world—

Who like a mandrake clings to the fattening soil—
 The applause and station merited by those
 Who die unknown in abject poverty.
 'Tis even thus with food ; since they who sit
 In purse-proud luxury the live-long day,
 Maintain such state by those who sweat and starve.
 Gold is a God, and Labour is the Ass ;
 But now 'tis ridden to the precipice,
 And makes a stand—back gazing on the past !

VOICES. Well we may—well we may.

ROBT. VIS. The folly's at its climax ! for behold
 The poor man's bed seized for the rich man's tax !
 Or sold—the produce helping to defray
 His share of straw i' the workhouse ! 'Tis as though
 Madness had leagued with law and cruelty,
 To crush down common sense with human hearts.

A VOICE. Ah, they pelt away ! they pelt away !
 Common Sense is worse than *stoned* to death.

ANOTHER. This man is called a visionary ;
 that means, he sees what a'n't. He sees what *is* now,
 if *I've* any eyes in my head, or a wife and children
 at home with nothing to eat, and taxes to pay ?

ROBT. VIS. Yet mark the difference of fate in
 those

Who make, and who possess this pagod wealth ?
 Idol and maker are alike consumed ;
 Identified with luxury—paid with scorn.
 Lo ! garlanded with ever-festive rites,
 Ripe to the cheek, blithe ribald in the eye,
 The golden calf—a bloated public sign—
 Swims in the sweat of the industrious poor,
 And dies at last, chok'd with o'erfatten'd throat.
 Labour, the only source, the only germ
 Of wealth, and power, and vast inheritance,
 At length beneath consideration sunk—
 Below the human level—out of sight—
 Is now required to do his task *unfed* !
 Oh, ignorant man of wealth ! first teach thy horse,
 Before such blindness stagnate all thy brain,
 Such reckless avarice swallow up thy heart !

A VOICE. Ah ! let him try to teach his horse,
 the vile man-nacker !—that would bring him to his
 senses beyond all *human* reason.

ROBT. VIS. All feelings now are lost in grasping
 gain ;
 No gush of natural kindness has a vent,
 Save at the risk of social banishment,

Or ruin revelling in the home of bliss.
 Money and barter choke the breath of love,
 As pestilence destroys the new-born rose ;
 While Charity, the fairest child of Christ,
 Is changed into a vex'd and cramp'd-limb'd dwarf !

A VOICE. True enough ; and, as to the rest,
 didn't Parson Malthus say that all poor people
 who marry and get into difficulty *ought* to be
 miserable and famished for such vice ?

ROBT. VIS. Then turn thee, Time, another
 course to tread ;
 Dispel the folly, supersede the wrong,
 By knowledge, reason, love, and firmness fix'd,
 Without the flow of fratricidal blood,
 Ruin, or injury, or worldly loss
 To those who now in just possessions roll ;
 But so arrange the industry to come,
 That each may reap the harvest of his toil,
 Nor longer see the rich, like idle weeds,
 Fatten and blossom midst the famine wide,
 And priestcraft flourish o'er the poor man's grave !

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